

# PROPERTY REPORT

**XXXX**  
**Islington,**  
**London. N1 XXX**



FOR

**Miss X**

Prepared by:

**XXXXXX**

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

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## **INTRODUCTION**

We have been instructed to inspect and prepare a Report and Schedule of Condition for XXX Islington, London. N1 XXX

We visited the property on XXXX

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

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 mid terraced ground floor and basement lock up unit located on Upper Street. The unit is currently a retail unit and once was a restaurant many years ago. You advised us that you are going change it back into a restaurant, your Legal Advisor needs to confirm it has the appropriate approvals and change of user class.

### User class defined

This is a Planning Permission process where you change the use of a building.

The front of the property sits directly onto the pavement with a tree close by. The rear is landlocked (it looks to have once had a path through the nursery) and there is a paved area accessed from within this property that goes around the perimeter of the building which is below ground level and now has no other access. We are concerned this may have problems with regard to Fire Regulations.

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

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## **SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION**

### **External**

Chimneys:	Brick chimneys
Main Roof:	Pitched, clad with slate
Gutters and Downpipes:	Cast iron and plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Cast iron and plastic
Walls:	Flemish Bond brickwork (assumed)
External Joinery:	Timber sliding sash windows and fixed picture window to the front shop window.

### **Internal**

Ceilings:	Lath and plaster and plasterboard (assumed)
Walls	Mixture of solid and hollow studwork (assumed)
Floors: Basement Floor:	Solid underfoot (assumed) concrete
Ground Floor:	Joist and floorboards (assumed)

### **Services**

We assume that the property has a mains water supply, drainage, electricity and gas. The electric fuse board is located in the gentlemen's toilets and the gas is located on the landing wall adjacent to the rear staircase.

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.

## EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Top of front elevation obscured by tree



Front Elevation



Street level of front elevation



Rear Elevation

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## **FACILITIES**

### **Ground Floor – Trading Area**

#### Front of House

- 1.0) Front retail area
- 2.0) Access corridor to the kitchen
- 3.0) Stairway (there is a floor over the access to this therefore it is not useable)

#### Half Landing

- 4.0) Rear restaurant area
- 5.0) Lobby to toilets and staircase area
- 6.0) Toilets one and two

#### Back of House

- 7.0) Kitchen

#### Basement

- 8.0) Store
- 9.0) Staff toilet
- 10.0) Access to rear area
- 11.0) Rear stairway

### **Outside Areas**

The front of the property sits directly onto the pavement adjacent to a Local Authority tree. There is a paved area, around the rear of the unit, below ground level and a children's nursery to the rear of the property blocking any access.

There are no toilets for the less able / disabled.

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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 200 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 lock up shop/retail unit (currently used as a computer/high tech unit) 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 usually divide the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to allow you to clarify and focus on exactly what the issues are. In this case we have felt it necessary to divide the items into 'The Good', 'The Ugly' and 'The Bad' due to the condition of the property.

## **The Good**

*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 location.
- 2.0) Much of the equipment remains to turn this back into a restaurant although we have not checked it is working (you need to check if the equipment is working or assume it is not).

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

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## **The Ugly**

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

### **1.0) Schedule of Condition appended to the lease**

Unless this property has a Schedule of Condition appended to the lease we would not take on this lease. As you are aware there are many problems with the property over and above what we would normally expect to find and we would consider this property to be too higher risk to take on.

We would recommend that you negotiate on the lease price as you have been offered a lease on the basis the property is in average/slightly below average condition for its age, type and style; this property is in poor condition.

### **2.0) Movement**

We could see cracks within the building that look to be structural and therefore recommend that anything relating to movement in the property is excluded from the lease. The cause of the movement is likely to be, in our experience, leaking drains.



Cracking around spin beam in store

We have not had any access to the rest of the building so it is hard to comment further as it could also be due to walls that have been removed or amendments that have taken place elsewhere in the property.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Exclude from the lease.

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### 3.0) Dampness

There is dampness coming up through both the floors and the walls we believe that this is in part to do with the drains blockages that we can see and partly to do with the underground drainage leaking.

Dampness needs to be excluded from the lease as we do not feel you should be responsible for this problem.



Internal dampness at basement level



Drainage rods stored to rear are always good indicators that the drains block a lot



Dampness

We would add that some of the dampness is self inflicted and some of the worse that we have seen for many years. At the time of the survey when we ran the taps for only a few minutes and the rear of the property flooded. The owners were very concerned about us running the taps due to the water meter, we feel it was due to the major problems they have with the drainage system.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Exclude from the lease. A closed circuit TV camera report prior to purchasing the lease to the property and expect to be cleaning these drains in years to come.

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## The Bad

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

### **1.0) Percentage of maintenance for the whole property**

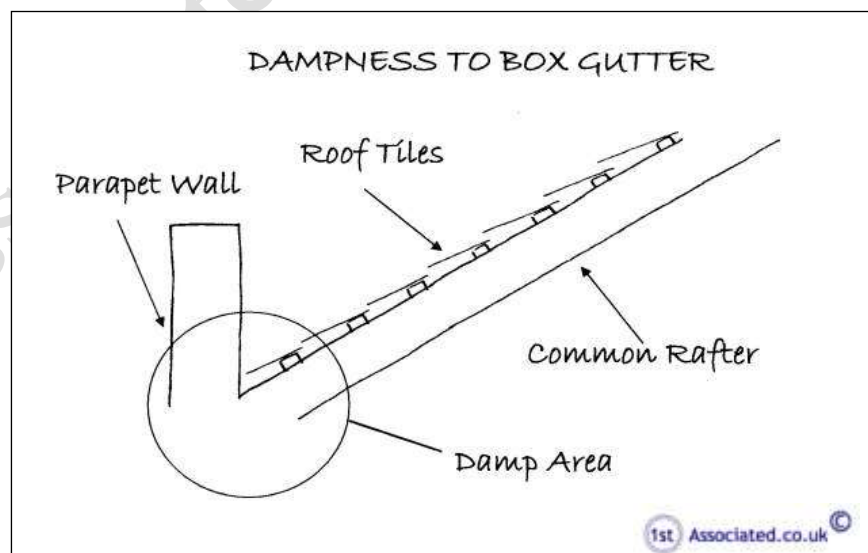
You need to establish what percentage you will be paying with regard to maintaining the whole property.

We can see some high level areas that have not been maintained for many years which would benefit from works such as:-



Viewing the property at high level

- 1.1) Chimneys – chimneys built in soft red brick and also large chimneys have been amended.
- 1.2) Roof – slate roof which we can see some tiles are missing and is poorly detailed.
- 1.3) Box gutter detail – renowned for blocking and causing dampness into the structure.



- 1.4) External joinery – requires repair and redecoration

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**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your Legal Advisor to check and confirm your liabilities with regard to maintenance.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £10,000 to £20,000 (ten to twenty thousand pounds) access will be very difficult and this will be an additional cost; please obtain quotations.

There should be what is known as a Planned Maintenance Schedule for the property as a whole.

## 2.0) Operational issues

There are specific maintenance issues that will affect the operation of this building:-

### 2.1) **Operational/maintenance issues**

We have identified in an earlier section that there are difficulties with regard to:-

#### 2.1.1) Blocked drains

#### 2.2.2) Dampness

2.2.3) In addition to this there are smells from the kitchen that are discharging with regard to the complaints that have been made by the estate agent and the nursery at the rear (remember they are on first names terms with the Environmental Health Officer).



Blocked drain



Dampness in store room

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**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that the drains are unblocked prior to you committing to complete on this property and also closed circuit TV camera report (sorry to repeat ourselves but this is very important) of the drains to be carried out to give you an indication of the problems. At the moment you have got sewage literally discharging into the yard at the rear of the property. Problems will be increased when it rains.

We would also recommend that you speak to the neighbours such as the estate agent and nursery to establish what the problems there are with the property (particularly regarding cooking smells). The cooking smells tend to indicate that your extract fan does not work properly. As discussed, it is a large extract that does not look to have any access openings to allow it to be cleaned. It does need to be cleaned before it is used.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £5,000 - £10,000 (five to ten thousand pounds) ; please obtain quotations. This depends upon the results of the closed circuit TV camera report to see if there is a way of getting water away from the property or it simply may not be possible without great expense. Work to the extract fan we feel will be expensive due to its size and the damage and deterioration we can already see to the roof. Please see our further comments on this.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

### 3.0) **Planned maintenance and reactive maintenance**

A multi occupied property such as this ideally should have a Planned Maintenance Schedule.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would ask your Legal Advisor to make a written request in relation to this to the Planned maintenance and reactive maintenance system from the Freeholders/Management Agents and if there is not one we would recommend that you have one carried out, this report can go towards it.

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#### 4.0) Rear slate roof needs repair

We can see that the slate roof is deteriorating and it is likely that the nail fixings are rusting. Whilst this may be a shared responsibility it will have a direct impact on your property as it is over the kitchen area (unfortunately we could not see any way of getting access into the kitchen roof space).



Kitchen roof from outside directly onto the nursery

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Exclude from the lease and/or the existing owner to repair the roof and then you take on the responsibility.



Slates hanging off



Felt repairs and lead tingles holding the slate on

#### 4.1) Rear roof access.

We were unable to gain access to the rear roof (and we have not seen the main roof).

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend an opening is formed into the main roof and that we return and check the condition of the timbers.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

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## 5.0) Reactive maintenance

Unless a good system with reactive maintenance is in place on the property which we doubt from what we have seen.

Reactive maintenance defined.

Reactive maintenance is where blockages occur to drains and electrics do not work. You will end up paying for the repairs and not be able to recoup them from the other occupiers of the property although it may be a shared cost.

## 6.0) Gutters and downpipes

There is a mixture of cast iron and plastic gutters and downpipes. We could see that the cast iron is cracked and also has holes in it meaning that any rainwater is not collected in the pipes but is discharged onto the basement area walls below which, in turn, causes dampness to get into the property.



Plastic gutter and cast iron downpipe cracked

In addition to this we have already mentioned that the drains are blocked this is both the foul drains and the rainwater drains.



Broken downpipe

### **ACTION**

Repair/replace the gutters and downpipes and ensure that they are discharging the rainwater away from the roof.

### **REQUIRED:**

**ANTICIPATED COST:** £1000 - £2000 (one to two thousand pounds); please obtain quotations.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

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## 7.0) Environmental Health Standards

As mentioned the property has dampness coming in through the walls and the floor which will mean that your storage facility will not meet Environmental Health Standards unless work is carried out.



Lateral dampness on party wall

Also at the time of our survey the toilets were not working and generally everything needed a clean, again this would not meet Environmental Health Standards.



Flooding to rear property when taps had been run due to blocked drain in passage way

In addition the property would not meet Environmental Health Standards due to not having a smooth impervious surface and there are general ingrained dirty areas where you will need to give the surfaces a thorough clean before you carry out any redecoration.



Ingrained dirt to tiles

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend an informal meeting with Environmental Health prior to committing to purchase the lease on these premises and to walk them around to get a general feel for what they would require to be carried out.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.



Flooding to passage way when taps had been run

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## 8.0) General redecoration

Generally throughout the property, as you are aware, the decoration standard is poor and requires redecoration however this will be difficult with damp walls particularly from what we can see it will be very difficult in the short term to get rid of this dampness.



Ceiling requiring redecoration

## 9.0) Services

### 9.1) Water supply and drainage.

Unfortunately we were unable to get all the taps to work, we noted that the ones that we did get working then flooded the rear basement area indicating blocked drains. We also noted that the gentlemen's toilet's was dry and we suspect that this does not work as well.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** All the drains will need rodding and we feel it is likely they will need regular rodding as there is a supply of drainage rods located to the rear of the property. From a lease point of view it may be a shared liability however from an operational point of view you will need to ensure your drains are cleaned so you can operate.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** Please see previous sections.

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## 9.2) Extraction and air circulation in the property

We feel that you need improved extraction in your kitchen and also in the toilet areas. The difficulty with the kitchen is that the smells may discharge towards the nursery, estate agent and any other premises at the rear. As you are aware, these neighbours have complained previously about the smells.



Kitchen

The extract system that is in place we cannot see any way of cleaning it via access points although we have not been able to gain close access to it.

If you recall we mentioned a fire in a case that we were involved with where the entire extract chimney caught alight and they do need regular cleaning.



We have, in the past, added access hatches to these to allow examination.

Extract flue not possible to clean hatches to these to allow

### 9.2.1) Extraction from the toilets

We could not see any extraction from the lobby in front of the toilets or from the toilets themselves. You need to ensure that Environmental Health are happy with this arrangement as without this you will be unable to open the premises.

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**9.3) Electrics**

Given the general condition throughout the property we would recommend an Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) test and report on the property particularly as you are likely to be using far more electricity than has been used in the property for awhile.



Old electrics

**9.4) Heating**

There is a boiler located within the kitchen, as far as we could see, it is not vented to external air which is illegal.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** A Gas Safe report to be carried out, you may have to relocate the boiler.



Boiler in kitchen

**10.0) Fire Regulations**

We would recommend you have an informal meeting with the Fire Brigade who will be able to advise you on practical measures of how to prepare yourself for a worst case scenario of a fire. This could involve the adding of fully maintained illuminated lights, hard wired smoke alarm system together with opening up the stairs (which we understand you intend to do) to allow an option on how to escape in the event of a fire.

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**11.0) Pigeon problem**

To the rear the gutters and downpipes have pigeon defectors to stop pigeons from landing. From the sheer number of these there looks to have been a big problem with pigeons. There were not any pigeons at the time of the survey (other than the dead ones in the rear yard).



Pigeon problem to rear



Pigeon defectors

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## **Other Items**

Moving on to more general information.

## **Services**

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

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would always recommend that you have an independent check by a specialist contractor.

## **Electrics**

As mentioned above we would recommend an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent carries out an inspection, test and report to Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE).

## **Heating**

The boiler that we have seen within the kitchen does not seem to be legal. You need to have a Gas Safety heating engineer check this. 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**

This has not been tested. In some areas of the property we were unable to switch the lighting on for example the rear restaurant area and the gentlemen's toilets.

## **Drainage**

It is essential that you have a closed circuit camera TV report.

## **Water Supply**

There is danger in older properties of having a lead water supply; we would

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recommend that you speak to the water company to ask them if they have carried out such replacement, as you will be re-piping much of the water used in the building it gives an ideal opportunity to also check for any remaining lead pipes.

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

### **Maintenance**

Due to the way this property has been altered and sub-divided we feel that there are likely to be problems with regard to who is responsible for maintenance. It will need good management and budgets for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in a good condition. This will prevent undue and unnecessary deterioration.

### **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:

We feel that this is a high risk purchase unless you can establish and resolve the problems identified. We also feel that you should have a contingency budget of approximately twenty per cent because we were unhappy with the answers given by the owners during our question and answer session and feel they clearly knew much more about the building than they were prepared to say.

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**



Whilst we have looked at the whole property the report has been on the unit that is for lease.

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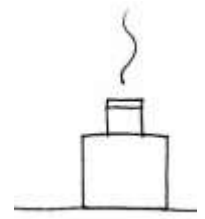
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## EXTERNAL

# CHIMNEY STACKS AND FLUES AND PARAPET WALLS



### Chimney Stacks

*Chimneys developed originally from open fires placed within buildings. From this, the chimney has developed to its present day format where it is used as an aesthetic feature and focal point rather than purely just to heat the room.*

We have not been able to view the chimneys properly.

### Chimney One

The main chimney that we can see we would like to comment on is to the rear and has the flue attached to it and is brick built but our main concern is how much of the base of the chimney has been altered.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We were unable to gain access to this area, we do feel it needs excluding from the lease.



Chimney one



Amendment to chimney

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### **Chimney Two – to the rear right hand side**

This chimney is brick built in a soft red brick, these chimneys tend to deteriorate and require re-pointing. We have not had access to the upper part of this property so we cannot comment upon whether any dampness is getting in however this is often the case.



Chimney Two

**ACTION REQUIRED:** As mentioned in the Executive Summary you need to establish your maintenance liability.

There may be other chimneys that we cannot see where there are problems and issues. We have come across problems where chimneys have been partly removed in larger old properties such as this.

### **Flues**

*Flues offer ventilation to things like boilers and soil and vent pipes and usually come through the roof covering, which can often also be a weak area.*

The property has a large metal as mentioned in the Executive Summary there does not appear to be a way to readily access this or clean it. We can see that it has been tarred in the past indicating to us that it has leaked and we can also see there are repairs to the base of the flue around the roof indicating that water has leaked through as well.



Extract flue

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Work will be needed to this flue, we would set aside the sum of £5000 (five thousand pounds) in case it needs replacing in part.

**XXXXX**

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## **Party Wall**

In a property such as this remember that there will be party walls which are walls that you share with others. 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 chimney stacks, parapet walls and flues from the parts we could see. 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.

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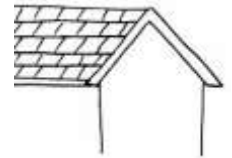
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# ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



*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.*

*The underlayer's function is to minimise wind and water damage. Dependent upon the age of your property this may or may not be present, please read on:*

We will consider the roofs in two areas, the main roof and the rear roof.

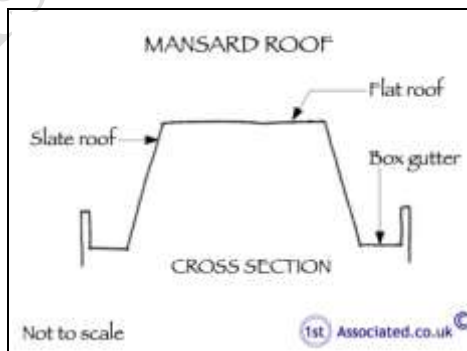
## Main Roof

The main roof is pitched and we assume clad with a slate although it is difficult to see from ground level. The property looks to have a mansard style roof, often these have problems with the box gutters. We can see in this case there is a box gutter with a small parapet wall.



Main roof

**ACTION REQUIRED:** The roofs need inspecting properly. Your Legal Advisor needs to obtain a copy of the Planned Maintenance Schedule for the property as a whole.



Mansard roof



Main roof

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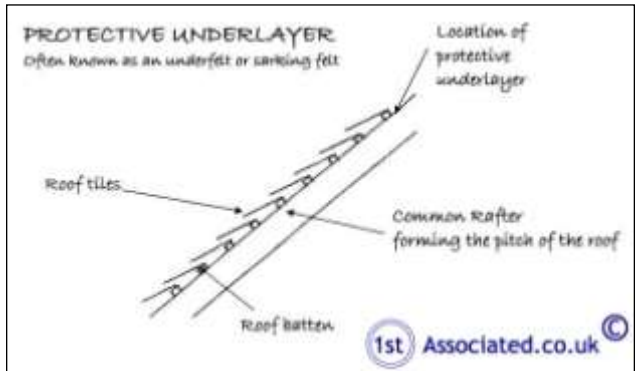
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**Protective Underlayer (Often known as the sarking felt or underfelt)**

*From the 1940s onwards felts were used underneath tiles/slates to stop wind damage and water penetration, these in more recent years have been replaced with plastic equivalents. These are commonly known as underfelts but now the name is not really appropriate, as felt is not the only material used.*



Protective underlayer

We did not have access to the main roof therefore we cannot comment.

**Rear Roof**

The rear roof located over the top of the kitchen area is pitched and clad with a slate and, from ground level, this looks in poor condition considering the roofs age type and style which will have a direct affect on your business if and when it leaks. Also as it discharges via the defective gutters and downpipes water down the outside of the property this leads to lateral dampness.



Low level rear roof

**ACTION REQUIRED:** The entire roof requires an overhaul and improvement together with the associated gutters.



Kitchen roof disperses rainwater directly onto nursery



Close up of miss placed and broken slates



Felt patch coming away

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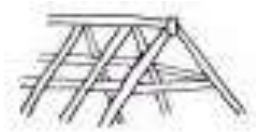
**ANTICIPATED COST:** £5,000 to £10,000 (five to ten thousand pounds); please obtain quotations.

Finally, 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 ten percent of the main roof from ground level via our ladder or via any other vantage point that we managed to gain. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see, however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

For further comments with regard to ventilation please see the Roof Structure and Loft Section.

## **ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT**



### **(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)**

*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.*

#### **Roof Access**

We did not have access to the main roof during the course of our inspection.

We did not have access to the rear roof directly over your kitchen.

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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 has a mixture of the original cast iron gutters and downpipes and plastic. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary as they are in poor condition.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Replacement and renewal. 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.



Plastic gutter and cast iron downpipe which is cracked



Blocked drain



Gutter is discharging onto next door's roof



Gully around rear of the property that needs clearing

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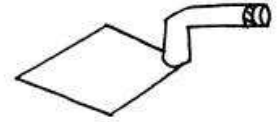
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# WALLS



*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 brickwork in a Flemish Bond pattern.

## Brickwork

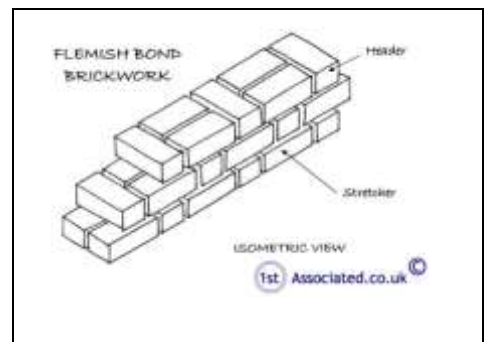
The property is built in a brick originally in a lime mortar in what is known as Flemish bond brickwork.

The term Flemish Bond relates to the way the bricks are bonded together and have a pattern visible from the outside of the property that shows the end of the brick (header), then the side of the brick (stretcher), then the end of the brick, then the side of the brick, and this pattern repeats course after course, i.e. header-stretcher, header-stretcher.

The solid external walls may be liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon their condition and their exposure to the weather. External faces should be kept in good condition.



Brickwork



Flemish bond brickwork

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Before the 19th Century, the practice of building timbers into external walls was almost universal. These were known as bonding timbers. They are of course prone to rot as solid walls allow dampness through. Unfortunately, without opening up the structure, we are unable to confirm if this is the case.



Brickwork frequently damp

Generally Flemish Bond brickwork is liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon the condition of the brickwork and the exposure to the weather. In this case it is essential that external faces be kept in good condition.

There has been some deterioration where there has been water damage over the years.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to repair your roof, gutters and drains to resolve the dampness problem.

### Render plinth

There is a render plinth to the base of the property indicating that it is likely to have a slate damp proof course behind it however it simply cannot cope with the amount of water that we can see to the rear of this property.



Render plinth to the base

### Lintels

In this age of property there is likely to be timber lintels or metal lintels both of which can be affected by the extreme amount of dampness that we have seen in this property.

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 /plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction

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or condition. In buildings of this age timber 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 / plaster has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the brickwork / plaster 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 you may find different depths of foundations. We would expect to find a stepped brick foundation possibly with a bedding of lime mortar to the main building and there may be a more modern concrete foundation to the rear.

### **London Clay**

This property stands on London Clay as with the majority of properties in London. 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 London properties. However, from our inspection of the walls we have found 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

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company of the property.

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

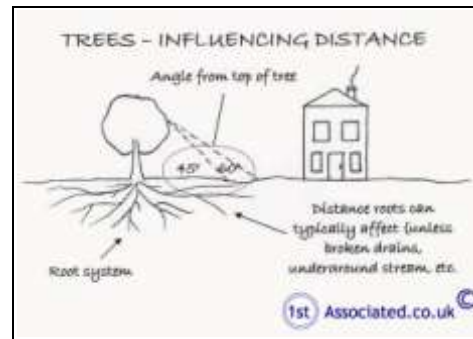
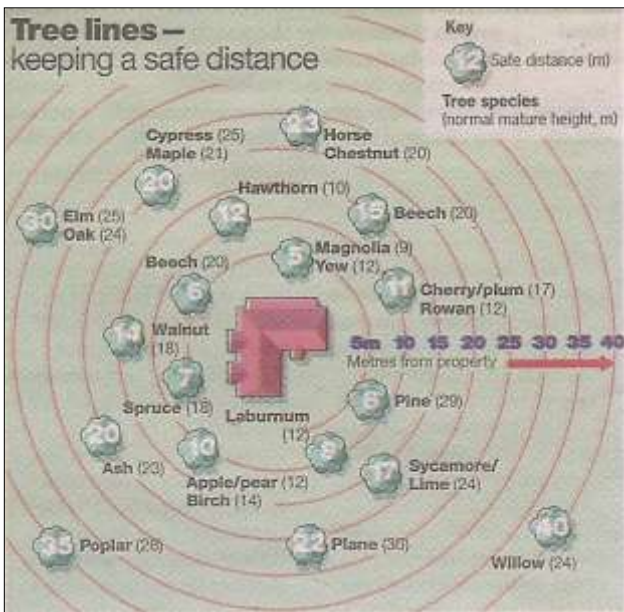
*Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.*

There is a tree within what we would term as influencing distance of the property.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your legal advisor to check and confirm who is responsible for maintenance of the tree.



The tree is located to the front of the property



Influencing distance

## Influencing Distance Defined

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.

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 were not able to see a damp proof course due to it being covered with a rendered plinth.



Render plinth

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.

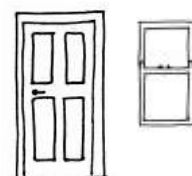
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## FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS

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

*Fascias and soffits offer protection to the rafter feet and also allow the securing of the guttering. 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.*

### Fascias and Soffits

The fascias and soffits are timber. They are painted and we would comment they are in poor condition as you would expect with the poor gutters and downpipes.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Once the roofs and gutters are repaired then the fascias and soffits need repairing and redecoration.



Fascias and soffits at low level

### Windows and Doors

The property has single glazed timber sliding sash windows and a front picture window to the front.



Picture window to the front in good condition



Flaky paint to window likely to require repair

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Unusual glazing on inside of the window. We have not seen this window from the outside but we

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General Information on Sliding Sash Windows

If you have not lived in a property with sliding sash windows previously, you should be aware that typically they are draughty and rattle. There is no easy way to eliminate this problem. In our experience, a general ease and adjustment of the windows and the addition of a plastic tube draught sealer (available from most DIY stores) and regular redecoration is the best option to minimise the draughtiness of the windows in this case. Horizontal Sliding Sash Windows (sometimes known as York Windows)

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.*

Generally the exterior of the windows would benefit from redecoration as would the fascias and soffits.

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

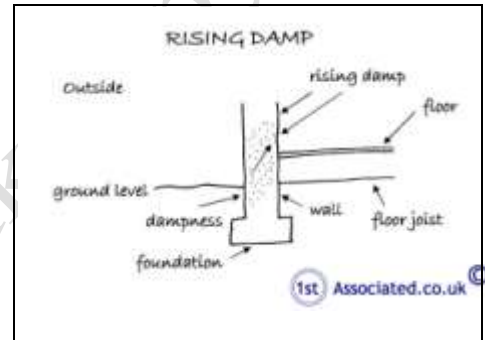
## DAMPNESS



*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 rising damp and we would comment as follows that there is a lot of dampness in the property which is both rising and lateral.



Rising damp

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

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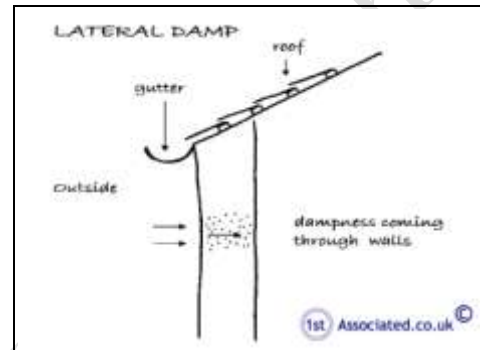
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## Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

*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 found dampness.

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



Lateral damp



Dampness in the property

## 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, it depends upon how you utilise the building. Given the lack of extract systems from the toilets and the kitchen area condensation may occur dependent upon the type of cooking. Common sense is needed and a balance between heating and ventilation of properties.

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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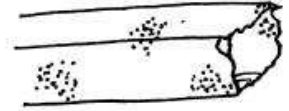
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## **TIMBER DEFECTS**



*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.*

We have not visually seen any dry rot during the course of our inspection. However the property is very wet and any timbers that come into contact with this could be suffering from dry rot such as timber lintels, bonding timbers as well as floor timbers.

We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of 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.*

We have not visually seen any wet rot during the course of our inspection. We repeat our comments from above that the property is very wet and any timbers that come into contact with this could be suffering from wet rot such as timber lintels, bonding timbers as well as floor timbers.

We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of 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 space in this instance we have not seen any signs of woodworm in the areas that we have accessed. However it is not beyond the realms of possibility that you could have woodworm within the roof given the conditions. .

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need form a loft access hatch into the roof to examine the area. 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, when you move into the property, floor surfaces should be carefully examined for any signs of insect infestation when furniture and floor coverings are removed together with stored goods. Any signs that are found should be treated to prevent it spreading. However, you need to be aware that many damp and woodworm treatment companies have a vested interest in selling their products and therefore have fairly cleverly worded quotations where they do not state if the woodworm they have found is 'active'. You should ask them specifically if the woodworm is active or not.

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 a test by an NICEIC approved electrician or equivalent to Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) standard.

### **Heating**

The property has a gas boiler heating system that we do not believe meets current safety standards.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** A Gas Safe test to be carried out.

### **Fuel – Gas**

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. The Gas meter is located on the stairway landing at the time of the inspection no heating was switched on.

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## **Lighting**

You need to have appropriate lighting for the restaurant layout. At the time of our inspection we could not switch on many of the lights as they were not working.

## **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 the layout will make it difficult to access the toilets; you need to think about how you will deal with this.

**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 flues. 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.

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## **LIMITATIONS**

As per our original Terms of Engagement, we would remind you specifically that:

We have not inspected parts of the structure that were covered, unexposed or inaccessible during our inspection. We therefore cannot confirm that such parts are free from defect, structural or otherwise.

We have not determined whether any hazardous materials such as high alumina cement, calcium chloride, asbestos etc have been used in the construction.

Our report is for the use of the party to whom it is addressed above and no responsibility is accepted under the Third Parties Act or for any third parties who use this report in whole or in part.

We have not carried out a comprehensive test of any electrical, mechanical or drainage services. We therefore cannot confirm that they are operational and in good condition. If you wish us to arrange tests please advise us.

We have not carried out or arranged for specialists to undertake any reports, for example an environmental report or an audit report upon the property. We are therefore unable to advise whether any contaminated or other adverse environmental issues affect the site.

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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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