Simon Hollis

Chartered Surveyors

Level 3 Building Survey

In Respect of:

[redacted]

For: [redacted]

Report prepared by Simon Hollis MRICS

For and on Behalf of Simon Hollis Limited

31st August 2023

RICS

[redacted]

Building Survey Report

Address: [redacted]

Surveyor: Simon Hollis

Date of Survey: 25th August 2023

[redacted]

Table of Contents

Signature: Simon Hollis For and on behalf of Simon Hollis Limited.

Date of Report: 31st August 2023.

[redacted]

1.0 About this Report

1.1 Address of the Property Surveyed (The Property)

[redacted]

1.2 Brief and Report

Instructions were received from [redacted] on 23rd August 2023 to undertake a pre-purchase building survey and produce a report detailing our findings. This report is broadly equivalent to an RICS Level 3 report and the areas covered are detailed above. We hope that the report helps you to make a reasoned and informed decision on the purchase of the property and subsequent repairs and maintenance. We detail the prioritisation of works in our Observations and Recommendations – Section 5.0. Where works are recommended, you should obtain quotations or further advice before you enter into a legal commitment. If you decide not to act on the advice in this report, you do so at your own risk.

This report is prepared on the assumption that you have viewed the property and are happy with the age, architectural style and visible quality standard of the building, its grounds and its surroundings.

1.3 Date of Inspection

The property was inspected on Tuesday 29th August 2023, 09:30 – 13:50. The weather conditions were mild and dry. Thermo-hygrometer readings of the external conditions at 11:35 were as follows:

Temperature:	20.5°
Relative Humidity:	54.9%
Dew Point:	11.1°
Absolute Humidity:	9.78 g/m^3

At the time of the inspections, the property was occupied and furnished with fitted floor coverings and possessions present throughout.

1.4 The Surveyor

On behalf of Simon Hollis Limited, the survey was carried out by Simon Hollis.

Simon holds a HND in Estate Agency, a Bachelor's with Honours degree in Urban Land Economics, and a Master's Degree in Building Surveying and is a Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, membership number 1222795.

Simon has completed the CITB NVQ Award in Understanding Repair and Maintenance of Traditional pre-1919 Buildings and the Chartered Institute of Building's Understanding Building Conservation qualification.

Simon is Dyslexic, please excuse any spelling or grammar errors in this report. Specialist software is used, unfortunately, it is not as clever as the developers would have you believe. If anything is unclear, or if you would like to discuss the report and future maintenance of the property, please do contact Simon:

Email: surveying@simonhollis.com Mobile Telephone: 07947 255 270

The survey is carried out on behalf of Simon Hollis Limited of 156 Murray Road, Sheffield S11 7GH.

The Surveyor declares no conflict of interest in inspecting this property.

1.5 Client

This survey report and any associated correspondence are for your personal use only and no responsibility can be or will be taken to others who may see it or wish to depend on it.

1.6 Comments on our Inspection Equipment

A Vaisala HM42 thermo-hygrometer is used to measure the ambient temperature, dew point temperature and relative and absolute humidity. This is fitted with a 4mm probe to investigate areas of suspected moisture ingress, and where possible, the sub-floor area. The external readings are noted above, and in the below tables to aid with the comparison of the external and internal atmosphere. These readings are of most use in occupied properties. In vacant properties where the internal doors are open and there is little heating or ventilation, a lot of the rooms become air dry and the readings are a less reliable scientific method of diagnosis.

A FLIR E6-XT thermal imaging camera is used to analyse inconsistency in surface temperatures and areas where there is cold bridging, which may indicate the presence of moisture trapped in the building fabric. In the thermal imaging photographs in this report, the temperature at the centre target point is shown on the top left of the photo. The temperature range of all areas in the photo is shown on the right. Again, the camera works best when used in an occupied property where there is a temperature difference (ideally >10°) between inside and outside e.g., a heated house in winter. Please note that the thermal imaging photos may look like they are taken from unusual angles/don't have the focus in the centre of the image. The images have been taken like this to avoid areas of thermal bleed affecting the image and analysis e.g., light fittings, radiators and windows.

Electrical conductivity meters, sometimes incorrectly referred to as 'damp meters' are only suitable for measuring the moisture content of clean untreated timber and are therefore only used to check if timber is dry as opposed to confirming the presence of moisture.

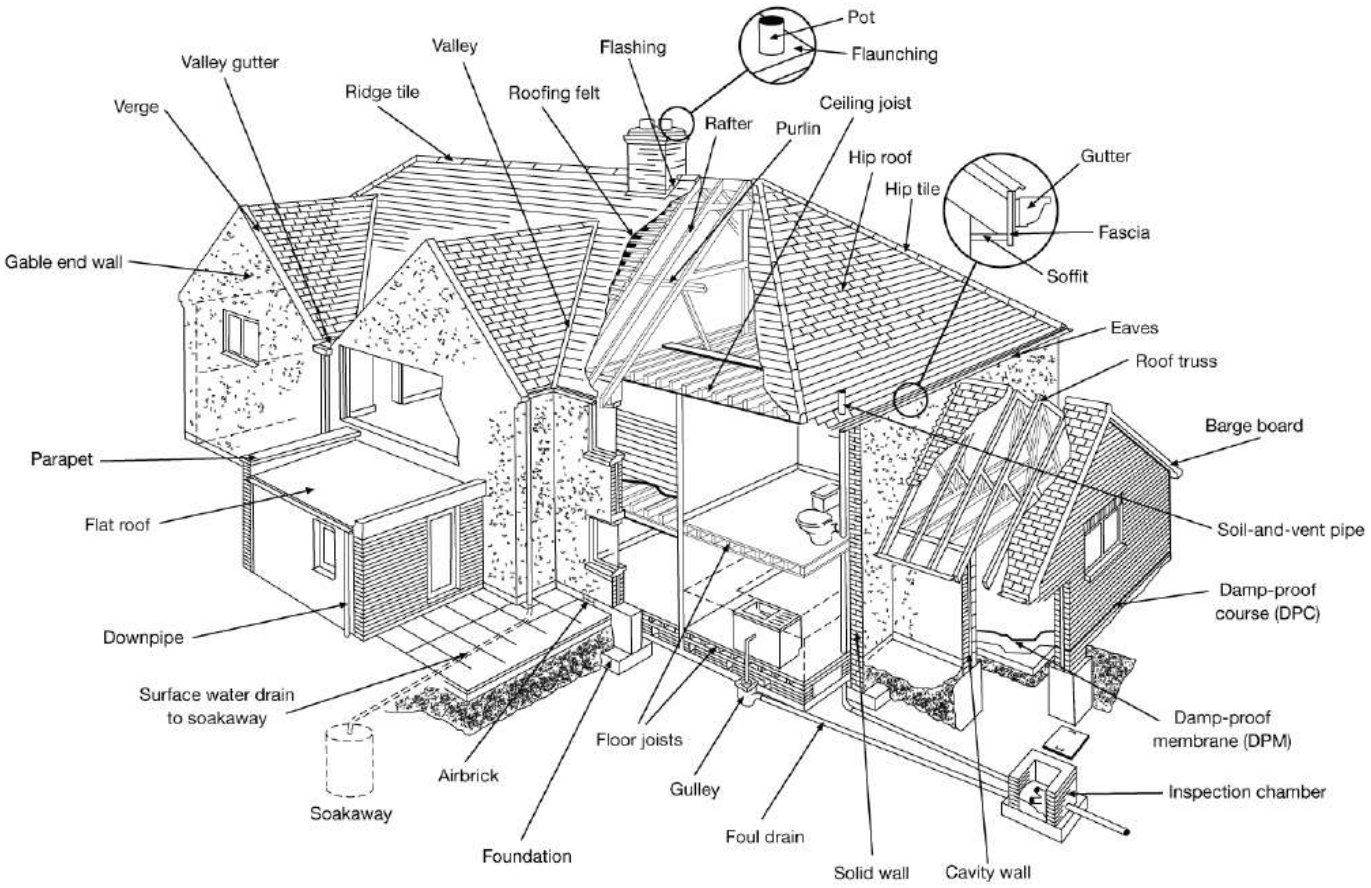
Where it is safe to do so, a pole camera or drone are used to inspect high-level areas that we cannot inspect from inside the property. Due to the drone hovering in the wind, it is not always possible

to take the drone photos ‘level’ so they may look like they have been taken at an angle, however, this is just the drone trying to compensate for the weather conditions.

For more information on the equipment used, see the ‘How’ page of our website: https://www.simonhollis.com/how.

1.7 Diagram of a Typical House

Below is a diagram of a typical house. This is included in the report so that the reader can easily identify the different areas being referred to in the report on the subject property.



Typical House. Credit: RICS

1.8 Abbreviations Used

The following is a list of abbreviations that we may use in our report. This is a generic list that we use for all buildings. A glossary of terms is provided in Section 8.0.

AH	Absolute Humidity	L&P	Lath and Plaster
CA	Conservation Area	MM	Moisture Meter
CDPC	Chemical Injection Damp Proof Course	PP	Planning Permission
CO	Conservation Officer	PV	Photo Voltaic (electricity)
CWI	Cavity Wall Insulation	RH	Relative Humidity
DG	Double Glazed/Glazing	SF	Second Floor
DPC	Damp Proof Course	SG	Single Glazed/Glazing
DPM	Damp Proof Membrane	ST	Solar Thermal (hot water)
FF	First Floor	TH	Thermo-Hygrometer
GF	Ground Floor	UFH	Under-Floor Heating
LBC	Listed Building Consent	WME	Wood Moisture Equivalent

1.9 Materials

Compared to modern buildings, traditionally constructed buildings often require different materials for repairs and maintenance. We have provided some brief thoughts and comments below on appropriate materials to use when undertaking repairs and maintenance. If you need any further advice on materials, please do contact us.

Historic England has a useful advice page on conservation. Link: https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/principles-of-repair-for-historic-buildings/.

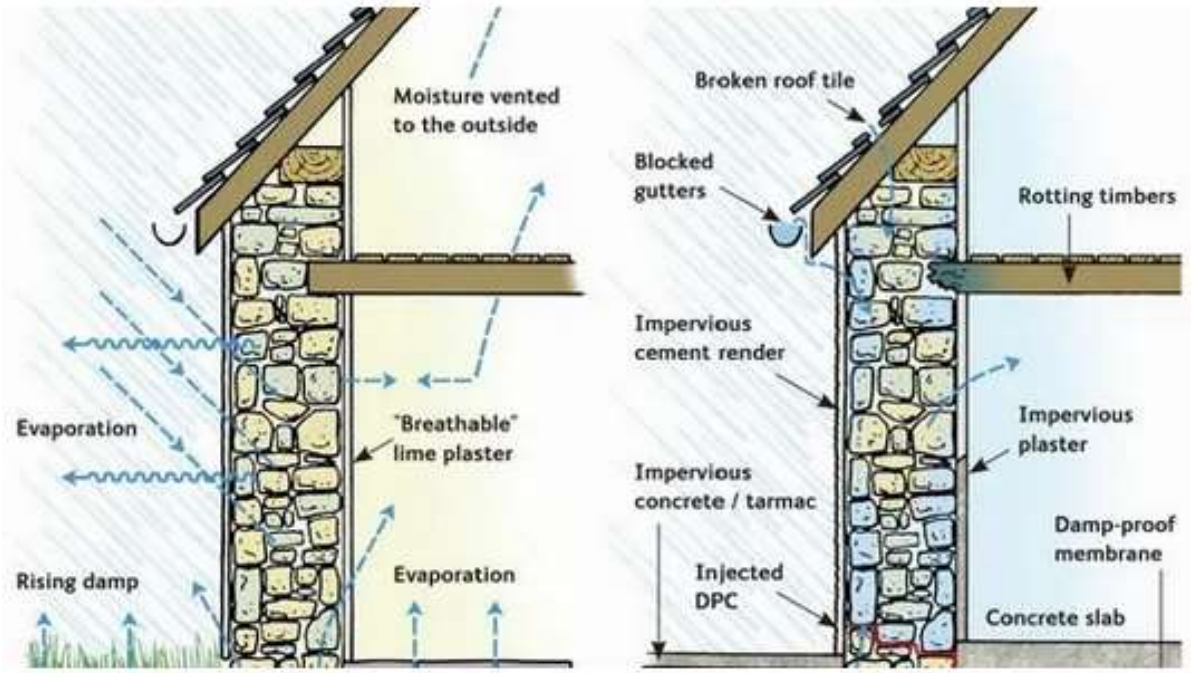
During this report, we will refer to various techniques and materials used to repair and maintain traditionally constructed properties. To save repeating advice throughout the report, we will likely refer the reader to the comments in this section of the report.

Works to traditionally constructed properties should only be undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced contractors with sufficient knowledge of construction, materials and their constraints.

Effects of Modern Materials

The illustrations below show a stone wall although the principles apply equally to brick-built buildings. On the left, it illustrates how a traditionally-constructed, well-maintained building should perform. On the right, it shows what may happen if modern materials are used.

Solid-walled, traditionally-constructed buildings rely on their large cross-sectional thickness. Wetting is limited to the outer 5-25 mm of masonry unless there is a defect. When the rain stops, the masonry goes through a drying-out process, where the retained moisture evaporates back into the environment. Traditionally this drying-out process was facilitated through the use of soft, flexible, absorbent and porous materials with high permeability, such as lime mortar. Research suggests that when lime-based mortar is used, up to 80% of the moisture taken on by the wall evaporates back into the atmosphere through the external mortar joints.



(Credit: www.justlimeltd.co.uk)

1.9.1 Mortars and Renders

In traditionally constructed buildings, the pointing mortar should always be sacrificial to the stone/brickwork/slate/tiles. In practice, this means that the mortar mix should be softer than the stone/brickwork/tiles and be the point of any failure. Your mason must make the final decision on the specification of the mix as they will ultimately be responsible for the success of the job (liaison with the Conservation Officer may be required if the building has statutory protection).

Where we advise that works are required to pointing/flaunching/roof detail, unless otherwise detailed, a non-hydraulic lime (e.g., CalBux 90) should be used as the binder in the mix together with the appropriate aggregate (sharp, gritty-type sand) for the job and local area (and the addition of a pozzolan, if required). For small repair works, a pre-mix could be considered, however, for larger jobs and rendering, the mix should be mixed 'hot' on-site. The use of lime-based materials requires a detailed understanding of the site, the weather and atmospheric conditions, the type of masonry/brickwork, locally available limes, locally available aggregates and their grading/void ratios, suitable preparation of the substrate and finished detail and, as important as the mix and the application, the aftercare.

For very specialist works and works to statutorily protected buildings, analysis of the existing and original mortars should be carried out so that the appropriate specification can be determined.

Unless specifically detailed in the report, cement (and its variants) should not be used as the binder in the mix. Hydrated, sometimes referred to as 'builders' lime' is also not appropriate to use to make mortar/render for traditional buildings.

Cementitious mortars and renders can cause several problems with traditional buildings. They are very hard and brittle so often crack when traditionally constructed buildings move with the seasons. These hairline cracks then allow rainwater to penetrate the mortar joints/render and accelerate the effects of freeze-thaw weathering and create problems with penetrating dampness. This moisture can also cause decay/insect attack to any timber that is socketed into/bearing onto the walls e.g., battens, joists, beams, lintels and sills.

As well as being hard and brittle, cementitious mortars are impermeable/significantly less permeable than lime-based mortars. In practice, this means that any moisture that makes its way into the structure is unlikely to be able to escape through the external leaf and if/when it does, it is likely to have to escape via the stone/brickwork and not through the mortar joints. This will place additional moisture stress on the stone/brickwork and likely accelerate decay.

When undertaking pointing repairs/re-pointing, the existing mortar should be removed by hand with a plugging chisel and lump hammer or an Arbourtech Allsaw. Angle grinders, SDS drills, mortar rakes, Kango hammers etc. should not be used as they will likely damage the stone/brickwork leading to repairs being required before the re-pointing works begin. Existing pointing needs to be removed to a depth of at least 25 mm or twice the width of the joint, whichever is greater (ashlar and fine brick pointing will need to be approached on a case-by-case basis and may require grouting as opposed to pointing).

1.9.2 Brick and Stone Repair

Brick and stone repairs should only be undertaken by specialist craftspeople using specialist materials. Using mortar to make surface repairs to stone and brickwork is not acceptable.

For localised repairs, a proprietary repair product should be used and can be tooled and pigmented to match the existing elevations. We have recently used Masons Mortar based in Glasgow which supplies a range of suitable products for most repair scenarios.

For larger repairs, stone/brick rotation or replacement stones and bricks may be needed. These should be like-for-like in terms of performance and aesthetics.

If the building has statutory protection, further investigation and a more detailed specification will be required for Listed Building Consent.

1.9.3 Paints

Traditional paints for timber would have been based on white lead or linseed oil. Both of these are long-lasting and permeable. More recently, plastic-based paints have become the norm.

For internal/external decoration, limewash would have originally been used before paints based on natural materials like earth and clay with natural pigments were used. As with other types of paints, in more recent times, these have been replaced with plastic-based ones.

Plastic-based paints are impermeable and can trap moisture beneath the surface accelerating the decay of the substrate. We do not recommend that plastic-based paints are used anywhere in traditionally built properties, instead, we recommend you consider the following:

Render/external areas (not made from timber) – limewash (homemade or pre-mixed), clay-based paint or mineral-based paint.

Timber – linseed oil-based paint.

Internal walls – limewash, clay or earth-based paints.

When researching/purchasing paint, we recommend that you purchase paint with the lowest SD (diffusion) value for the colour/type of paint you need. Limewash is the most permeable finish and has an SD value of 0.01.

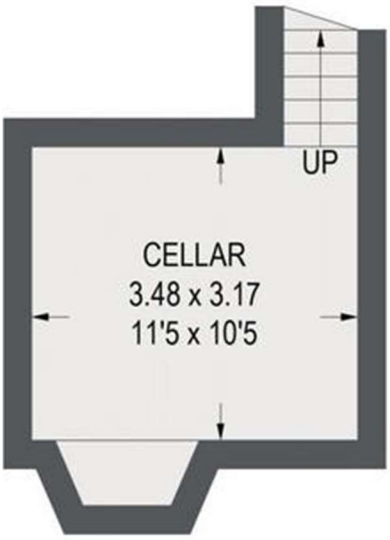
We do not recommend that wallpaper is used in traditionally constructed buildings as the paste and paper affect the permeability of the walls and the moisture management of the rooms. If wallpaper must be used, it is best to use this on the internal walls, excluding the chimney breasts.

1.9.4 Plaster

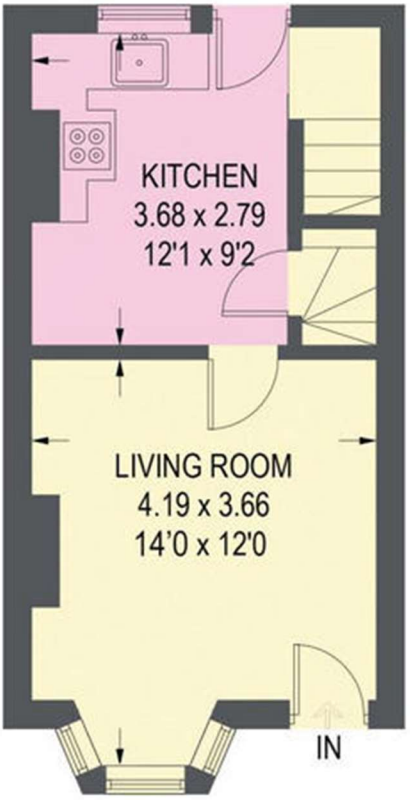
When traditionally built properties were constructed, walls would have been plastered with a traditional three-coat lime-based plaster system. Unfortunately, many properties we inspect have since been skimmed with gypsum-based plaster and painted with plastic-based paints. This leaves an impermeable internal finish and will cause increased moisture stress within the property and require more intensive moisture management. Where practical, we recommend that gypsum-based plasters are removed and replaced with lime-based plasters and that clay or earth-based paints are used to decorate as detailed above in 1.9.3. As with mortars and renders, the aftercare is as important as the mix and application.

2.0 Floor Plans

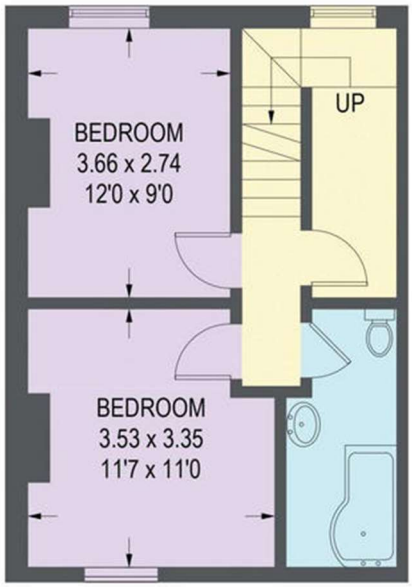
The floor plans are not a completely accurate representation of what is on-site, however, they are a good reference point for the reader. They should not be used to scale from.



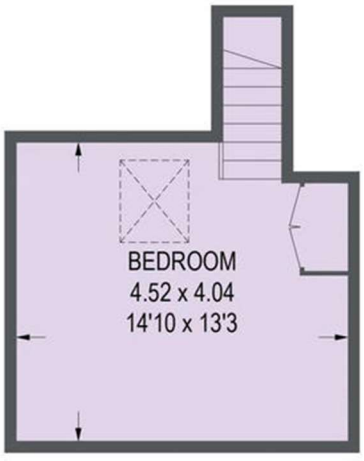
CELLAR
12.1 SQ M / 130 SQ FT



GROUND FLOOR
26.9 SQ M / 289 SQ FT



FIRST FLOOR
36.5 SQ M / 393 SQ FT



SECOND FLOOR
19.1 SQ M / 205 SQ FT

3.0 Executive Summary

This section of the report provides our overall opinion of the property and highlights areas of concern. It must be read together with the rest of the report so that you form an overall opinion of the property. We are very happy to discuss the report with you once you have digested its contents.

Roof – immediate repairs are required to bring the roof into watertight condition; however, the covering is coming to the end of its economic and service life and will likely need replacing in the next few years.

Chimney – there is a slight twist to the stack that will require monitoring. One chimney pot is badly damaged and a second is cracked.

Rainwater goods and drainage – the fall pipe from the front guttering runs needs to be redirected to the mains drainage and the front and rear runs should be cleared out. The soil vent pipe is mismatched with different parts and we recommend removing the redundant elements. Immediate works are required to the shared combined sewer and these repairs should be undertaken without delay.

Windows and doors – the Velux window is in poor condition and will need some work to return it to functional use. The catch on the back door does not function correctly and needs adjusting. We were unable to inspect the function of the front door.

External walls – the lintel above the passageway is cracked and needs replacing/supporting - this will require potentially expensive design and works to correct this. Some of the stone windowsills on the rear elevation are delaminating and should be repaired and there is an area of poorly consolidated brickwork above the rear soil vent pipe branch.

Internals – these are tired in areas and will require some work. The second-floor attic room does not comply with current building regulations.

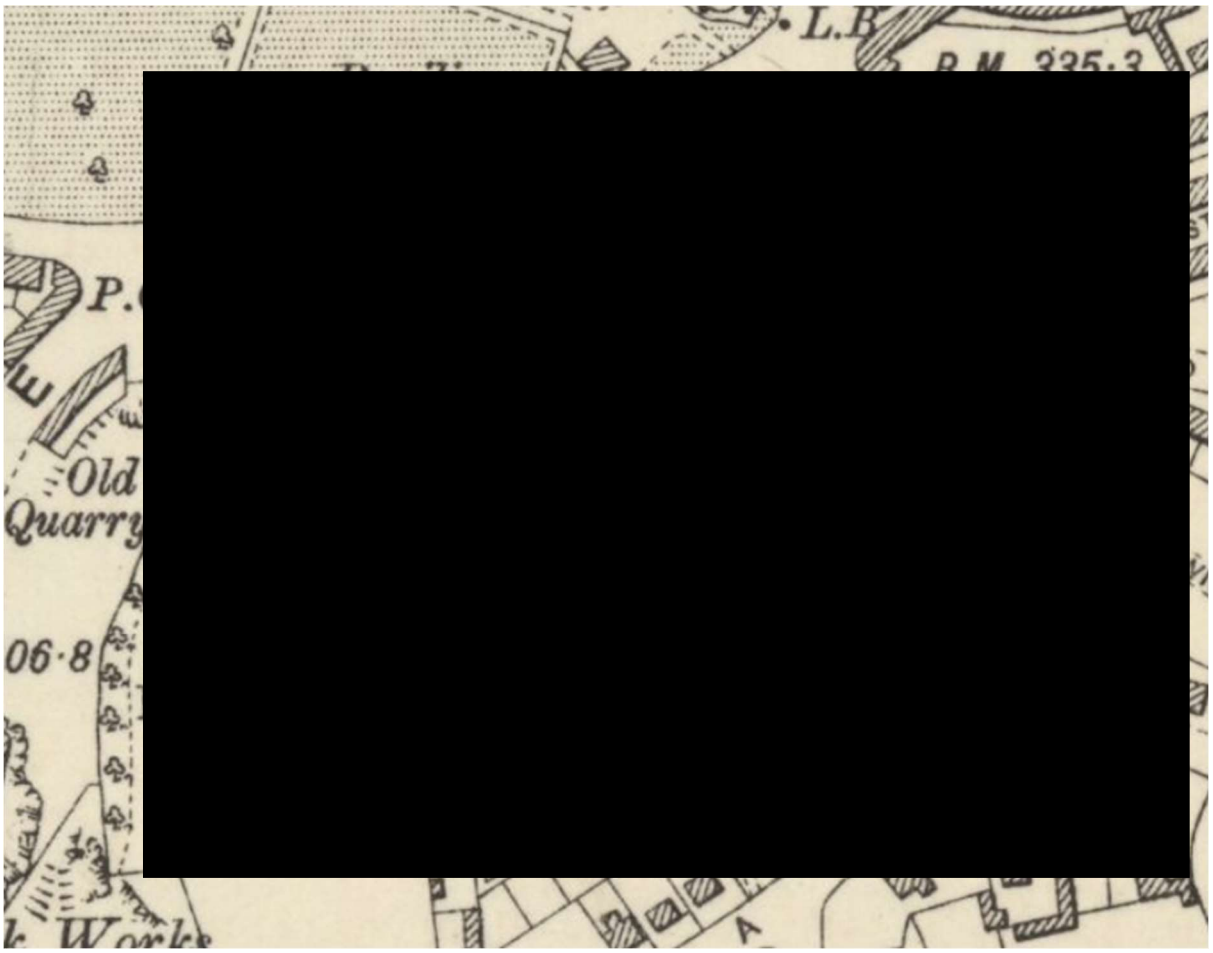
Moisture and ventilation – ventilation to the redundant chimney flues, bathroom, kitchen and sub-floor all need to be improved.

External areas – works are required to the front garden walls, surfacing in the front garden, passageway and rear garden and the decking area.

Prior to the exchange of contracts, we recommend that you discuss this report with your legal advisor.

4.0 Property History and Overview

[redacted] is a 2/3-bedroom mid-terrace home with a small front garden and rear yard sited on a sloping plot, the front door facing in a northern direction. We think that the property was built early in the 20th century. The map below is the latest available OS map of the area – OS Six-inch England and Wales, 1842 – 1952, Yorkshire Sheet CCXCIV.SE, Revised 1901 to 1903, Published 1906. The approximate location of the subject property is shown in red.



Credit: NLS

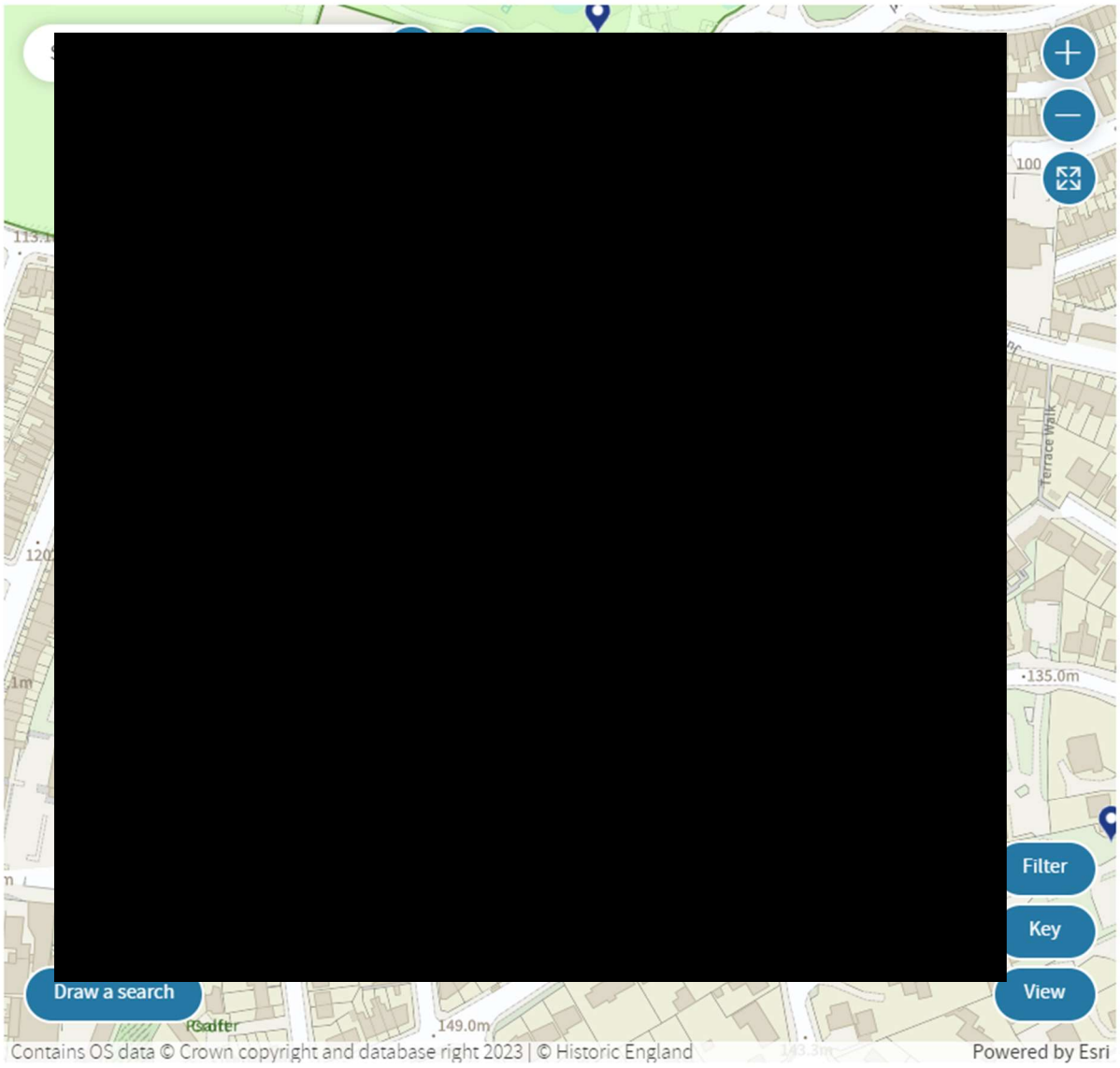
The vendor advised that they have owned the property for 3 years. During that time, they advised they have not made any building insurance claims, there has been no flooding, there have been no neighbour disputes and there have been no problems with invasive species.

They also advised that they have not made any planning applications or undertaken any work on the property.

There is a right of way down the passageway and across the back of the property to the neighbouring house on the left-hand side and the two houses on the right-hand side. Your legal advisor should ensure that satisfactory documentation is in place for this and that you are happy with this arrangement before you legally commit to the purchase.

4.1 Listing

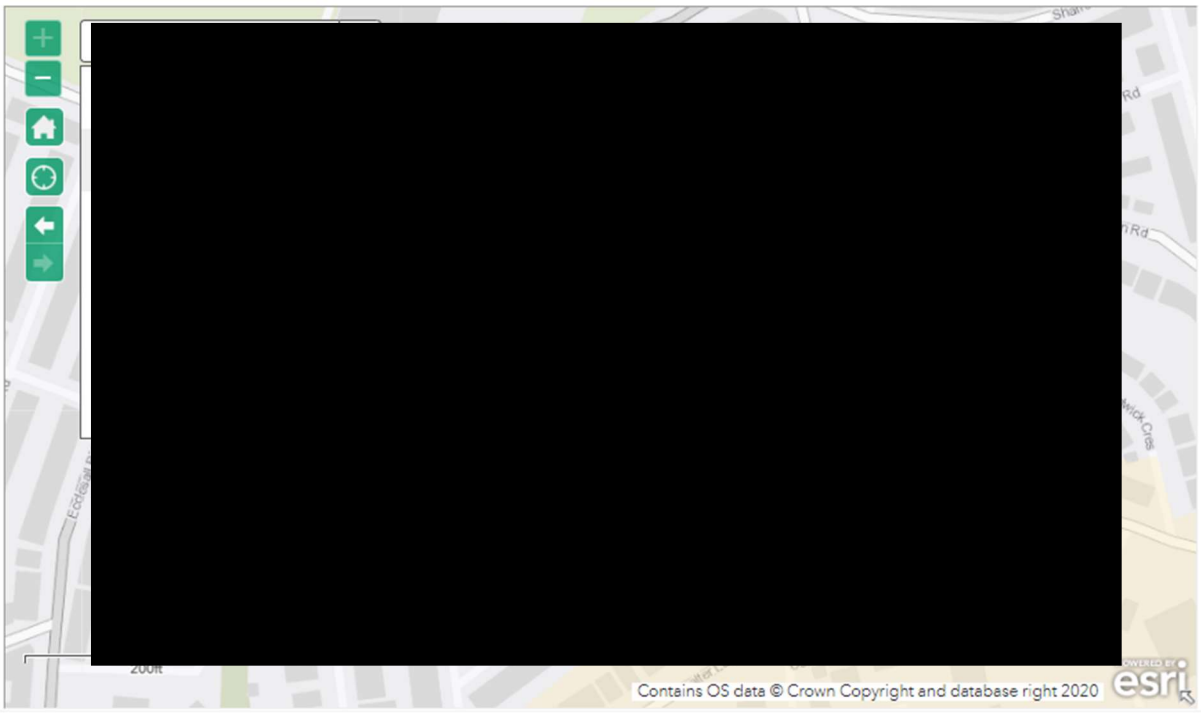
The property was not listed with Historic England when we checked their database on the 24th August 2023.



Link: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search?postcode=[redacted]&clearresults=True.

4.2 Conservation Area

The property does not lie within a Conservation Area:



Conservation Area Map

Link: https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/planning-development/conservation-areas.

Accessed: 24th August 2023.

5.0 Observations and Recommendations

Our observations are made as if stood at the front of the property with the right-hand side being up the hill. Room names stated in the report are as labelled on the estate agents' floor plans/locations of the rooms. The external inspection is limited to those areas that can be seen from the ground and with the aid of a drone.

We only see the property during the course of one day in one season, usually only in one weather condition. It, therefore, may be necessary for you to observe and monitor some items when you move in. If you become concerned about any of the areas, we have recommended that you monitor, please do contact us.

When we note that works are required, we will usually advise that these are required:

Straight away – works should be undertaken without delay to stop the defect from having an immediate detrimental effect on the property.

When you move in – within the first year of ownership.

The short to medium-term – end of the first year to year five.

Long-term – post year five.

Record and monitor – photograph/measure the defect and check it with the change in seasons to see if it gets any worse. If it does get worse, further action may need to be taken.

Before instructing contractors, you should familiarise yourself with homeowner responsibilities under The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.

5.1 Roof, Chimneys and Flashings and Roofspace

Works at a high level including those to the chimneys, roofs and rainwater goods may require scaffolding to be erected. You should factor the cost of this into any works required and consider if economies of scale could be achieved by grouping these works together.

Limitations to our Inspection

The roofs have only been inspected from ground level. We have used a drone where possible however we have been unable to physically get close to the roof covering. We have detailed our findings below; however, this should not be considered a full roofing survey and where there are multiples of the same defect, we have included examples.

5.1.1 Roof

Roof Structure

The roof is of traditional purlin and rafter construction. When viewed from the ground the front and rear pitches looked flat and the ridge straight. We could not stand particularly far back to observe the rear pitch.

Roof Covering

The main roof covering is natural slate and the bay window is covered in mineral felt. The ridge tiles are clay bedded in mortar. The covering is likely the original covering to the house and there is no under-torching or felt to act as a second line of defence to water ingress.

The slates are mostly quite heavily pollution-stained and there are some immediate repairs required that we have detailed below. Once these have been undertaken, the roof covering will likely last a couple more years, however, it is coming towards the end of its economic life and you should begin planning for its replacement. (Although the good slates will last longer, it will become uneconomic in terms of paying for annual repairs and access).

Where we have recommended repairs to the roof covering, this is to prevent rainwater ingress and dampness. Delays in undertaking these repairs could begin to compromise the roof structure.

Overhead photo of the front and rear roof pitches.

Overhead photo of the front roof pitch. Note the heavy staining to the slates.

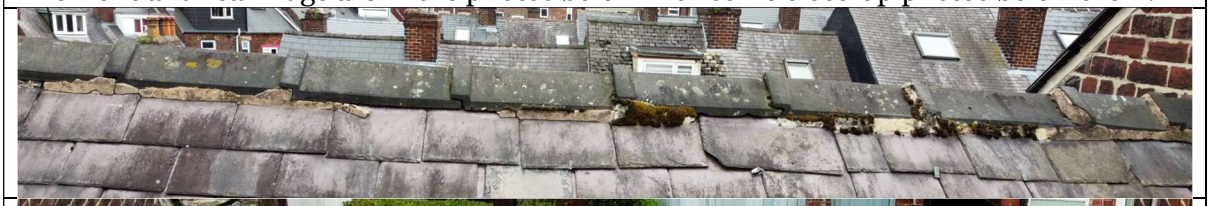
There is no saddle piece where the ridge abuts the chimney stack or right-hand gable wall.

A saddle piece should be added next time high-level works are undertaken.

Ridge – clay overlapping ridge tiles wet bedded in mortar. A couple of tiles are damaged and most of the ridge pointing is missing or damaged.

The ridge should be re-pointed before winter.

The front and rear ridge are in the photos below with some close-up photos below them.



There are several areas of damaged slates across the pitch, all areas of damaged slates should be repaired/replaced as soon as possible. We have included some example photos of the areas below.

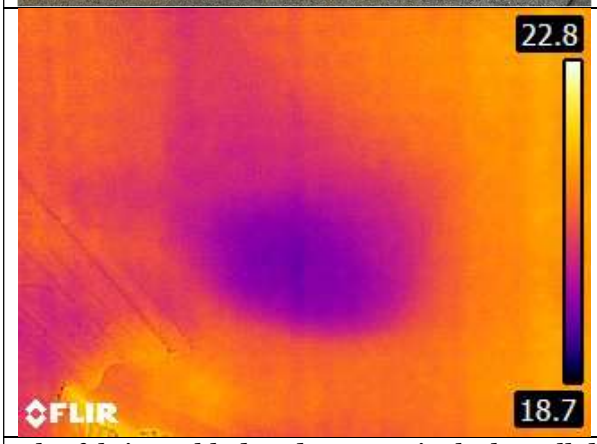



The original decorative flat roof that can be seen on the neighbouring properties has been replaced by a mineral-felt flat roof.

There is shadowing on the brickwork from the original upstand and flashing detail which has been poorly tidied up.

Internally, there is a cold spot on the right-hand side, perhaps the location of a previous leak. We have included the internal thermal imaging photos below.





The felt is ruckled and not particularly well detailed around the front and sides of the bay.


Overhead photo of the rear pitch. There is less pollution staining on the slates on this pitch.

There are several areas of damaged slates across the pitch. All areas of damaged slates should be repaired/replaced as soon as possible. We have included some example photos of the areas below.

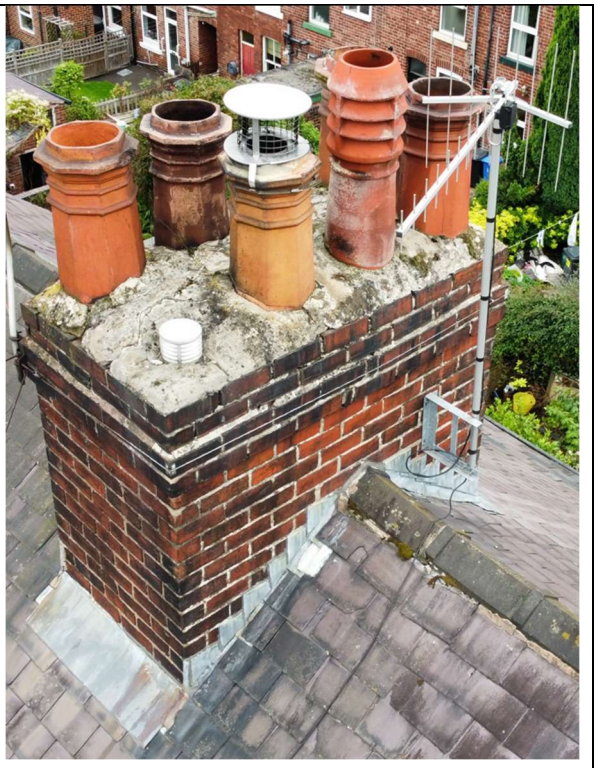
5.1.2 Chimneys and Flashings

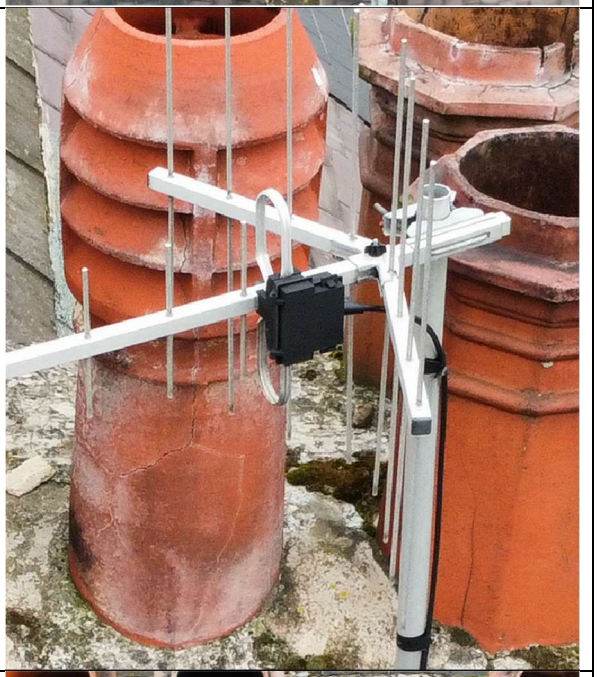
The property has one central chimney stack which is shared with the neighbouring property to the left-hand side. You should ensure you are happy with this arrangement before you legally commit and your legal advisor should check the title documents to see if maintenance obligations are detailed.

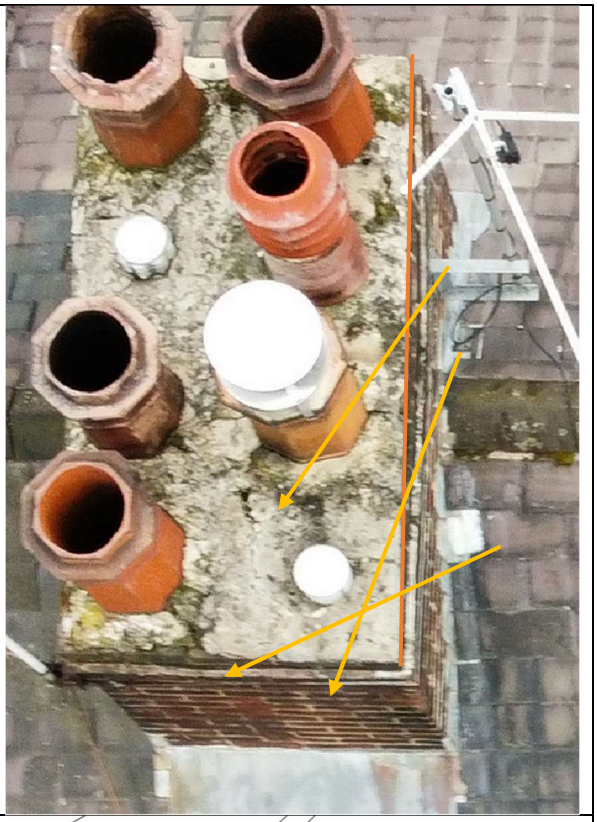
The chimney stacks are the most exposed part of the property and these should be inspected annually and their condition recorded to ensure that any defects are tracked and repairs are arranged when required. A poorly maintained stack can allow rainwater penetration internally and debris to block the rainwater goods and drainage.

Redundant chimney flues are full of impurities from years of burning fossil fuels. If flues are well-ventilated and dry, these are unlikely to cause any problems. If moisture builds up inside unventilated flues, these impurities will dissolve and migrate around the moist areas. When the moisture finds somewhere to evaporate e.g., the surface finish of the chimney breast, the impurities will be left on the surface. If the surface finishes are not permeable e.g., a gypsum-based plaster and a plastic-based paint, damage to the surface finishes is likely to occur.

The stack had two T.V. ariel mounted on it. The fixings should be regularly inspected to ensure that they are satisfactory.

<u>Pots</u> Front – gas cowl. Centre-front – living room wood-burning stove. Centre rear – badly damaged, and needs to be replaced. Rear – cracked, but can probably be strapped or you may wish to replace. <u>Flaunching</u> In acceptable condition with only a couple of cracks, see further comments below. <u>Corbelling</u> Needs attention, see below. <u>Stack</u> Slight twist to the left-hand side, see below. <u>Flashings</u> The front aprons are not set high enough up the stack and there are no restraint straps – see below.	

The rear two pots should have vented caps added to their tops.	
The centre rear and rear pots are both cracked. The centre rear is badly damaged all around and needs to be replaced (and a vented cap added once replaced). The rear can probably be strapped up for now as opposed to being replaced.	
The flaunching on the subject property will probably last another couple of years. The flaunching on the other side of the stack (the neighbouring side) is in poor condition and this may allow moisture into the subject properties side of the stack.	
The pointing around and above the corbelling is in poor condition and needs to be raked out and repointed in the next year. See our comments above on mortars.	

Stack – the stack has a twist on the right-hand side towards the centre twisting left. This needs to be recorded and monitored to see if the twisting is active. This can be done at the same time as the repairs to the courses at and above the corbelling.	
	
Front apron – the upstand on the front apron is not high enough – it should be 150 mm above the pitch. There are also no restraint straps under the apron (to slip this slipping). These should be added next time high-level works are undertaken. This is the same on the front and the rear of the stack.	

5.1.3 Roofspace

There is a 'room in the roof' attic bedroom (as detailed in the Agents description). You should be aware that this room doesn't meet current regulations in terms of being classed as a bedroom (if the room was converted post-1989, it should have met the relevant regulations at the time it was converted). To put this into perspective, nearly every terrace house that we inspect has a 'room in the roof' with similar construction details and there is a seemingly endless debate between agents, surveyors and legal advisors as to whether these houses should be classed as two or three-bedroom. This debate may end in a unanimous decision at some point in the future, however, as far as we are aware, these 'rooms in the roof' have been questioned by surveyors and legal advisors for at least the last fifteen years with no definite conclusion. Your legal advisor should make enquiries as to whether the vendor/their predecessors know when this was formed or if a regularisation certificate has been applied for, or can now be applied for. Works required to bring this up to standard are likely to be expensive and disruptive and include providing a protected escape/escape windows/fire compartmentation/an inspection by a structural engineer to ensure the structure is compliant/a complainant staircase/mains interlinked fire alarms etc. You may be able to date the conversion based on the age of the Velux window if you can get this to open. There is a risk element here, however, you are likely to find this on most similar properties so a decision will need to be taken on the significance of this risk to you.

We have only been able to undertake a limited head and shoulders inspection through the front access hatch into the front roof void area as there was no decking. Due to the absence of decking, we have not been able to inspect the party wall fire compartmentation, ceiling timbers, rafter feet or wall plates, purlins, rafters or ridge and there could be defects in these areas.

There was around 100 mm of fibreglass/mineral wool insulation fitted between the ceiling joists. Fibreglass and mineral wool insulation can trap moisture against timbers and cause associated decay and insect attack. Consideration should be given to replacing this with one hundred per cent sheep's wool as this is permeable and does not trap moisture. The access panel at the front was not insulated or draft-proofed.

There was electrical wiring on and under the insulation. This is not recommended as it can cause the wiring to overheat and melt the sheath. This should be clipped up out of the way.

Thermo-hygrometer readings have been taken in the roofspace as follows:

	Temperature °C	Relative Humidity %	Dew Point °C	Absolute Humidity g/m³
External reading	20.5	54.9	11.1	9.78
Rear store cupboard - Ambient	20.9	59.6	12.7	10.86
Front Roofspace - Ambient	23.2	53.8	13.3	11.24

The atmospheric conditions in the roof space are a little damper than we would like to see, however, they are broadly in-line with the external conditions. When the roof is re-covered, adequate ventilation must be factored into the design.

The attic room stud walls are braced to the rafters/vice versa. The pitch appeared flat when we inspected it from the ground.	
The underside of the original roof covering is visible in the front area. At some point in the more recent past, an improvised eaves tray type arrangement has been added – see the red box.	
There was a mix of insulation materials along the external side of the stud wall we could access. Consideration should be given to replacing these with permeable insulation such as sheep's wool insulation	
The fibreglass and mineral wool insulation that is laid across the first-floor bedroom ceilings can trap moisture. Consideration should be given to replacing these with permeable insulation such as sheep's wool insulation	

Front roofspace – there is a redundant fan and associated electrics in the roof void. These should be removed.	
The building materials etc. in the roofspace should be removed.	
We have not been able to inspect the rear roofspace as this is underdrawn with plasterboard and was full of possessions.	

5.2 Rainwater Goods and Drainage

The rainwater goods and drainage are vitally important to the effective management of rainwater around the property. If repairs are not actioned promptly, faults could quickly lead to problems with penetrating dampness internally and further deterioration of the building fabric. Rainwater goods and drainage should be inspected at least every six months and any debris present cleared. It is possible that due to climate change, and more persistent heavy rain that the capacity of the guttering, fall pipes and drainage will need to be increased.

Limitations to our Inspection

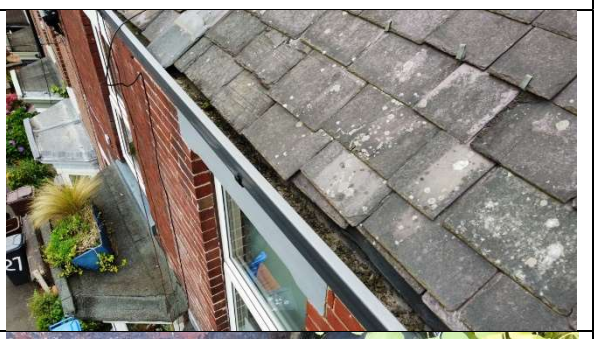
We do not perform or comment on drainage design calculations or test installations. We have not had sight of any drainage plans or maintenance records and would recommend a CCTV and mapping-type survey if you require assurance as to their condition, capability and safety. Contractors should be familiar with the requirements of Approved Document H, BS EN 13508-1:2003 and the Manual of Sewer Condition Classification, 5th Edition.

At the time of our inspection, the weather was dry and we were unable to observe the functionality of the rainwater goods and drainage. You should observe the fittings during heavy rainfall and repair any leaks as soon as possible.

5.2.1 Rainwater Goods

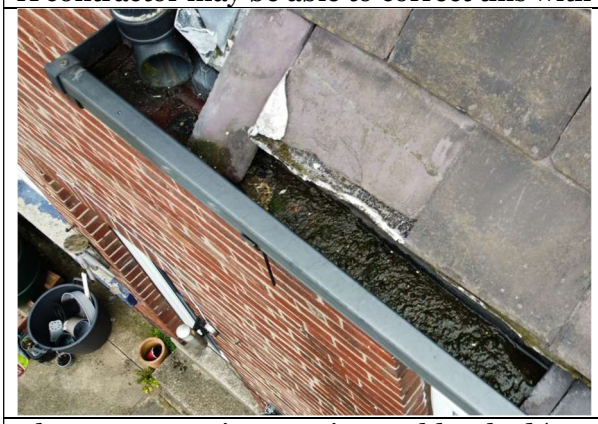
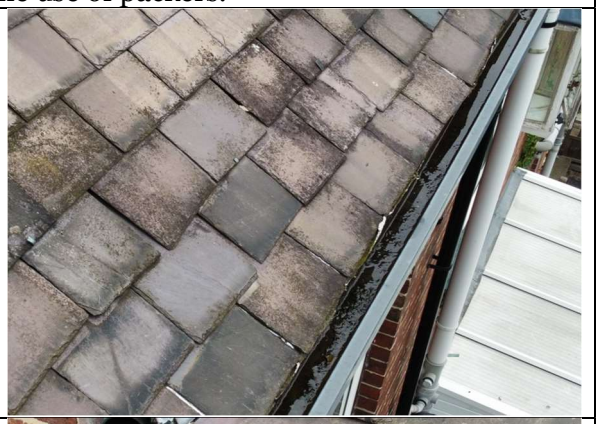
The original timber rainwater goods have been replaced with uPVC. uPVC rainwater goods are likely to suffer from UV degradation and bleaching and the seals in the unions and outlets will need replacing during the lifetime of the system.

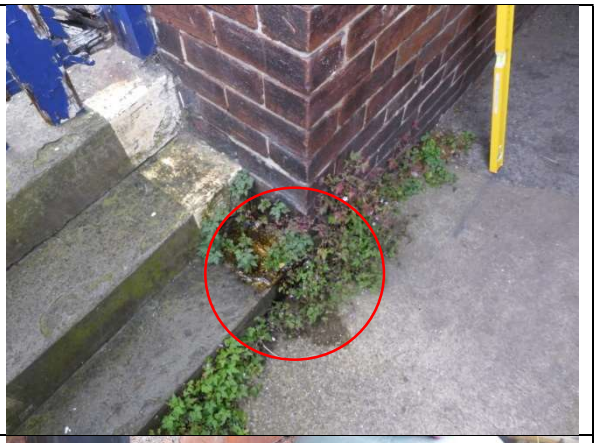
<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Front Elevation</td></tr>
<tr><td>The rainwater goods of the two neighbouring properties to the right-hand side discharge into the subject properties guttering. This is a lot of rainwater for the guttering and fall pipe to handle.

You should ensure that you are happy with this arrangement and your legal advisor should check that satisfactory documentation is in place for this arrangement.</td><td>  </td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">There is debris along the length of the front guttering run. This should be cleared before winter.</td></tr>
<tr><td>  </td><td>  </td></tr>
<tr><td>Front elevation fall pipe – this runs down the front elevation then along the bay window and it discharges straight to the ground.

This is not appropriate and could cause long-term problems with moisture and structural stability.

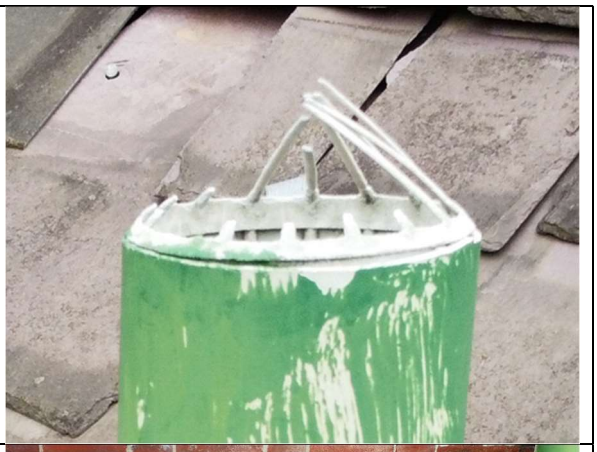
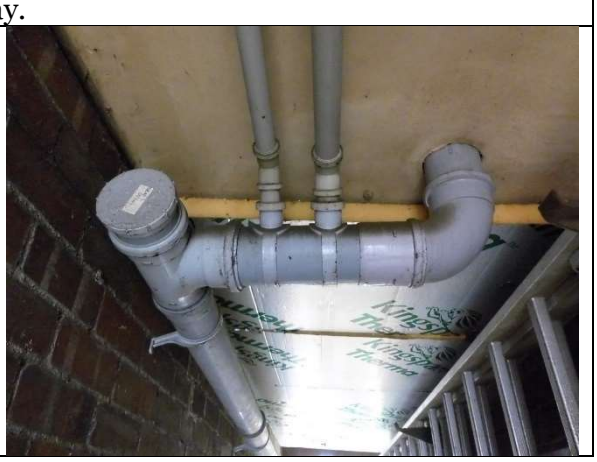
It should be routed into the mains drainage in the short term. This is likely to be expensive disruptive work. As the other properties discharge their guttering into this fall pipe, your legal advisor should check to see if there is a maintenance arrangement for this.</td><td>  </td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
</table>

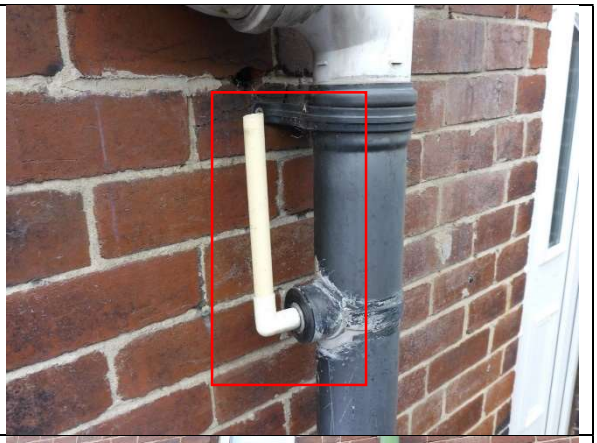
Rear Elevation	
There is debris in the rear guttering run which should be cleared out before winter. There is also some minor ponding along the run which suggests that this is not set to the correct fall. A contractor may be able to correct this with the use of packers.	
	
The rear guttering run is sun-bleached/UV damaged which will likely accelerate its failure.	
The two right-hand neighbours' guttering discharge into the subject property's guttering and the left-hand neighbour's guttering discharges into the subject property's fall pipe. This is a lot of rainwater and any leaks could quickly cause moisture ingress-related problems. Your legal advisor should ensure satisfactory documentation is in place for this arrangement.	
	

Water is leaking from the guttering – we cannot see if this is from the subject property or the neighbouring property. This needs to be addressed regardless as this could cause heave or erosion and this pier supports the lintel over the passageway and thus the rear elevation of the houses.	
The rear fall pipe discharges into a water but on the neighbouring property. This is full and leaking and could cause moisture and structure-related issues with the subject property. We recommend speaking to the neighbour about this arrangement and fitting an overflow to the water butt that is directed into the mains drainage. The lower section of the fall pipe is now unsupported and should be properly clipped back to the rear elevation in the short term.	

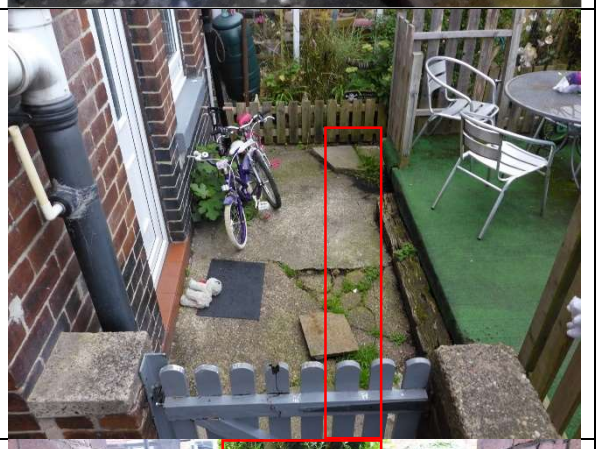
5.2.2 Drainage

The vendor advised that the property is connected to the mains drainage. There is an inspection chamber for the shared combined sewer at the end of the passageway. We recommend the water supply company come to survey this immediately so that repairs can be planned as soon as possible – see further comments on this below.

Soil vent pipe – the damaged bird guard needs to be replaced next time high-level works are undertaken.	
Rear elevation – we think that the green soil vent and waste pipes are redundant and that the bathroom used to be at the rear of the property before some reconfiguration took place. If they are redundant, they can be removed and the wall tidied up. If they are kept, additional pipe clips should be added to take the weight off the joints. Note that a Dergo/air admittance will need to be added to the section that is in use.	
Passageway – pipe clips should be added to the bathroom waste pipes to take the pressure off the joints. This should be done in the short term. Note that this run is particularly long and it would have been much easier to connect into the soil vent pipe at the front of the passageway.	
	

The redundant bossed pipe should be removed and the penetration properly plugged.	
Note that the pipework in this area is all mismatched.	
The top section of the soil vent pipe is not plumb and there are not enough pipe clips. Additional pipe clips should be added in the short term if this section is to be retained.	
The kitchen waste pipe is sun-bleached, this will likely lead to premature failure.	

The kitchen waste pipe should be extended and better directed towards the centre of the gully.	
The underside of the inspection chamber cover is corroding. It will likely need replacing in the medium term. Note that this is over a pedestrian traffic area so should be regularly inspected to ensure it is replaced before it fails.	
There is a plastic soil vent pipe in the inspection chamber – this is an unusual arrangement and is unlikely to comply with building regulations. It likely belongs to the property on the left-hand side as when we ran some water through the waste pipe on the subject property, it did not come out of here.	
The inspection chamber is in poor condition, the benching is damaged and there are cracks/displacements in all of the pipework. This will leave sewage and waste water leaking into the ground below and IMMEDIATE action is required to address this. This could undermine the structural stability of the house if it is left. Close-up photos are below.	

	
The pathway has collapsed along the route of this drainage run so it may be damaged and needs to be part of the drainage inspection. There is no point in repairing the pathway until the drainage has been surveyed and any repairs have been undertaken.	
There is a hedge behind the inspection chamber and there is a drainage run out the back of the chamber running along the line of this hedge. The roots of the hedge may cause damage to the drainage run and we recommend that this is inspected with the rest of the drainage and any required repairs are undertaken.	

Note that the neighbour's soil vent pipe is located in the subject property's passageway. See our comments in Section 5.4 on this.	

5.3 Windows and External Joinery

5.3.1 Windows and Doors

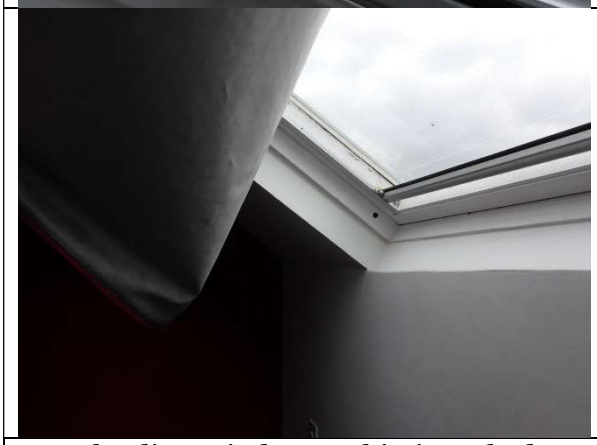
Windows and doors need to be well maintained so that they are easy to use and provide an adequate level of security. If windows do not function correctly, they may not be used by the occupants to ventilate the house which could cause condensation to build up.

To ensure that the property is kept secure, we recommend that all window and door locks are checked on a regular basis and that the locks are changed when you complete the purchase and that the replacement locks meet your home insurance company's requirements.

Where the original timber window and door frames have been replaced with uPVC, it is not possible to determine whether any metal strengthening has been built into the frames (as this is hidden by the plastic). It is also not possible to determine if the upper floors were supported during the installation. It is therefore possible that there will be movement in the masonry structure around the window and door penetrations due to the removal of the support provided by the timber window frames.

There are no records on the local authority building control portal for the replacement windows and doors and if the vendor is unable to provide you with satisfactory documentation, a regularisation certificate should be obtained via the Local Authority. We could only find etched stamps on two of the windows (see below) and there was no information stamped on most of the bandings, bar the bay which was stamped '*BGGSKM60860*'. We have searched this on the Internet, however cannot find what it relates to.

The Velux window on the rear roof pitch was in generally poor condition – the paint was blistering and flaking off, the blind was broken and the window did not open with reasonable force. It is usually challenging to find someone to repair these and replacement may now be the only option.



Rear landing window – this is etched EN 15120 for safety glass, as it should be as the window is 600 mm from the ground.

First floor Rear bedroom window – this is etched EN 15120 for safety glass, as it should be as the window is 700 mm from the ground.	
Several windows have restrictors on. You should ensure you get the keys for these from the vendor upon completion.	
Kitchen window – the seal is damaged and should be replaced.	
Living room – where glass is <800 mm from the floor, it should be safety glass. The glass in the living room is c. 560 mm from the floor and we could not see any safety glass markings etched into the glass. Consideration should be given to replacing this with complaint glass.	

Living room – there is a small area of damage around the seal. This section should be replaced.	
Living room door – we have not been able to check the function of this as it had an 'L-shape' sofa in front of it.	
Kitchen door – the handle is worn and we could not get the door to stay closed on the latch without raising the handle to throw all of the multi-point locks. This should be repaired in the short term by a suitably experienced contractor.	
Front and kitchen doors – the weep vent covers are missing and should be replaced.	

5.3.2 External Joinery

The original timber facia boards and guttering have been replaced with uPVC. From a ground-level inspection, the facias looked to be in acceptable condition.

Front elevation – the decorative timber trim that is seen on the neighbouring houses is missing from this house, leaving only the shadowing across the brickwork and lintel. You may wish to consider replacing this to cover the areas of shadowing.	
The original decorative timber around the bay window has been replaced with uPVC this is stained and there are a couple of areas where the seal is missing. It would benefit from a clean and re-seal.	
	

5.4 External Walls

Any repairs and maintenance detailed in this section should be undertaken in accordance with our comments in Sections 1.9.1 and 1.9.2.

The property is constructed from solid 9" thick fair-faced brick walls.

Limitations to our Inspection

We do not inspect foundations as part of pre-purchase surveys due to the disturbance that this would cause, therefore we are unable to comment on their condition and performance.

General Comments	
There has been some localised repointing to areas of the front and rear elevations. In most of the areas we inspected, an incorrect (hard and cementitious) mortar mix has been used. This will need to be taken out and the areas repointed in a more appropriate lime-based mix. See our comments above in Section 1.7 on mortars.	
The original black ash mortar is visible in areas along the passageway.	
There are areas of overpointing, where mortar has been smeared over the existing mortar as opposed to the original mortar being raked back to 25 mm/twice the joint height and the exposed depth repointed. This is poor practice.	
	

Front Elevation
Passageway lintel and brickwork above – the stone lintel above the passageway has snapped where it bares onto the front elevation on the left-hand side of the passageway. The lintel has cracked all of the way through and there are c. 7 courses of brickwork above that have dropped by up to 4 mm and there is an area closer to the neighbour's soil vent pipe that is out of plumb and the brickwork is visibly displaced. This is likely as a result of a combination of defective drainage, historic problems with leaking guttering and the fall pipe discharging at the base of the house as opposed to into the mains drainage. The drainage should be inspected and repaired and the fall pipe taken into the mains whilst the work to replace the lintel is planned in. As this is a shared combined sewer, the water authority should repair this, however, they are unlikely to deal with the fall pipe or the lintel/brickwork repairs free of charge. The lintel should either be replaced or a steel lintel with a lip should be placed behind and underneath the lintel in situ (see example below). The brickwork should then be repaired. A structural engineer should be consulted as soon as possible. We have included some close-up photos below.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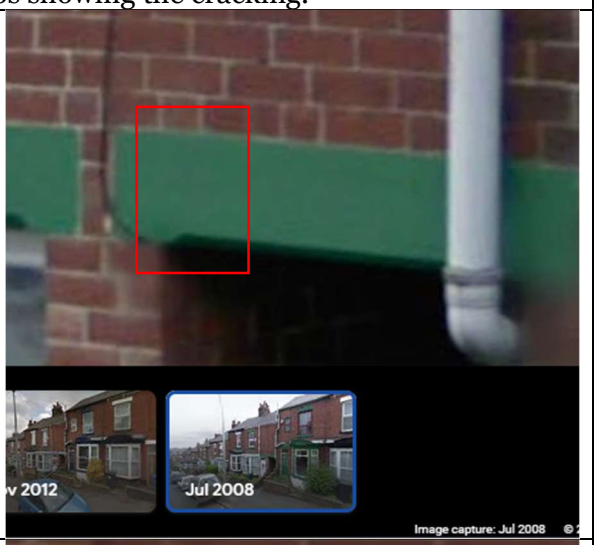
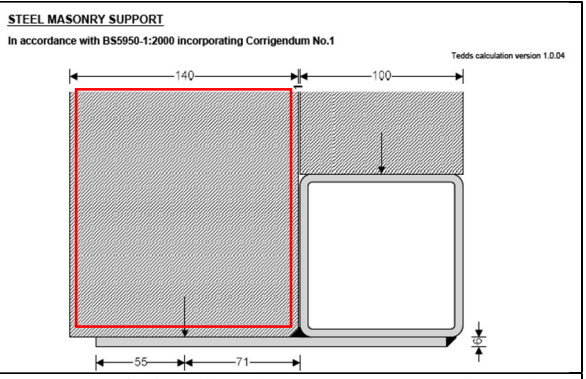
Below are some screen snips from Google Maps showing the cracking.	
Google Street View July 2008 – there does look to be a line across the lintel in this photo, although it is not particularly pronounced. Credit: Google	
Google Street View November 2012 – there does look to be a line across the lintel. Credit: Google	
Google Street View October 2014 – the crack is clearly visible in this photo and photos since this date. Credit: Google	

A screenshot example of the type of support beam that may be required, with the lintel in the red box.

This must be designed by a suitably qualified structural engineer.



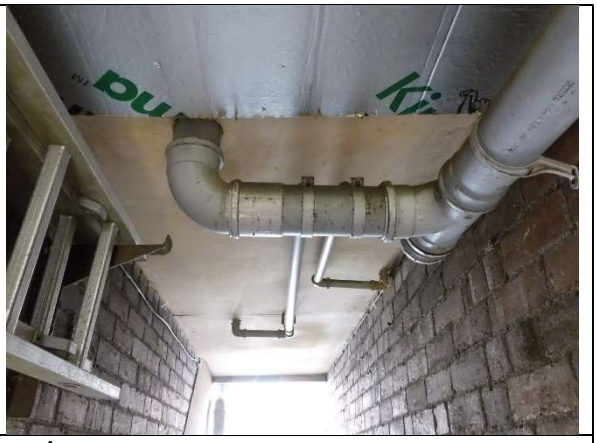
The front elevation below the lintel is c. 5 – 10 mm out of plumb. The passageway elevation was plumb.

First-floor front bedroom – areas of stone repair are required on the windowsill. See our comments in Section 1.7 on this.

Bay window – we have not been able to inspect the lintel above the bay window as it sits behind the flashing upstand.

The paint is peeling around the bay windowsill. This should be prepared and redecorated. See our comments above in Section 1.7 on paints.

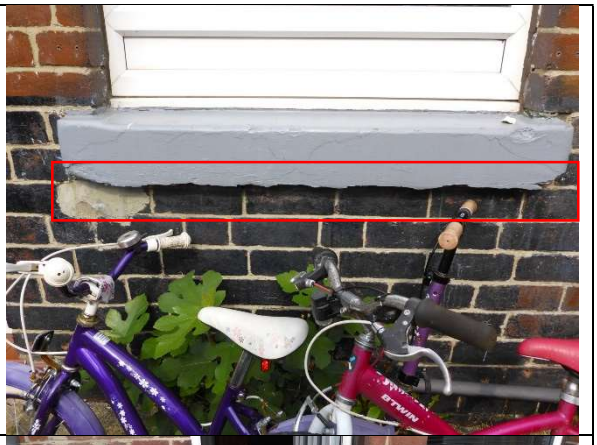
The neighbouring properties' soil vent pipe is affixed to the front elevation of the subject property – you should ensure you are happy with this arrangement before you commit to purchase and your legal advisor should ensure that there is satisfactory documentation in place.	
The redundant fixing should be removed.	
The wall along the passageway is generally a little out of plumb, however, there are some areas where the faces of the brickwork are not all in line. We did not note any areas of stress to the brickwork or mortar beds.	
	

Note that only part of the passageway ceiling is insulated and there is no ventilation gap above the insulation that is there.	
Rear Elevation	
Landing/passageway arch – the left-hand brick is cracked. This should be monitored.	
Landing/passageway windowsill – the lower arris/part of the windowsill has delaminated, likely as a result of a leak in the guttering above. Some close-up photos are below. This should be repaired with a proprietory stone repair product.	
	

Close-up photo of the brickwork above the rear of the passageway. The arch is quite flat and the brickwork courses above are not level. The area around the drainage penetrations has been poorly detailed and some consolidation would tidy this up. See our comments above on the 'green' drainage items.

Kitchen door – there has been a slight drop in some of the gauged bricks above the kitchen door, likely as a result of replacing the timber with uPVC.

This should be recorded and monitored going forwards.

Kitchen windowsill the lower corners of the stone have been lost to delamination. These areas should be repaired and the windowsill prepared and redecorated. See comments in Section 1.7 on paints.	
The lower section of the rear elevation has been painted – likely as a result of ill-advised damp-related works. The remainder of this paint should be removed as it will likely trap moisture against the bricks causing accelerated decay.	

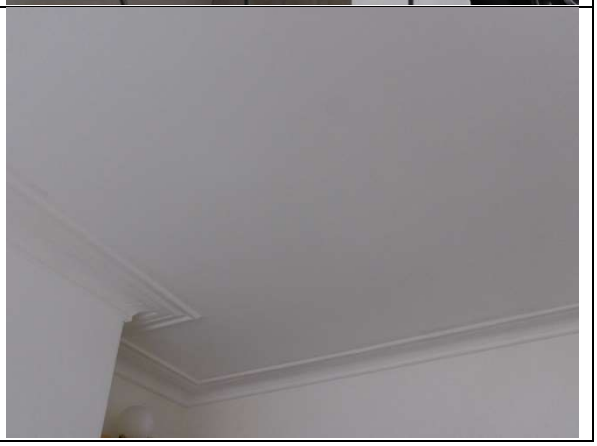
5.5 Internals

Floor coverings, furniture and contents restricted our inspection in some areas and it is possible that defects could be concealed behind these items.

5.5.1 Ceilings

We noted some hairline cracks on several ceilings. These can be cut out, and filled during the course of redecoration, however, they may reappear with time.

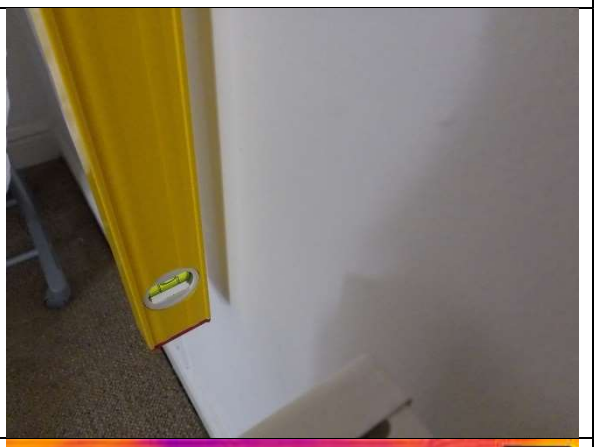
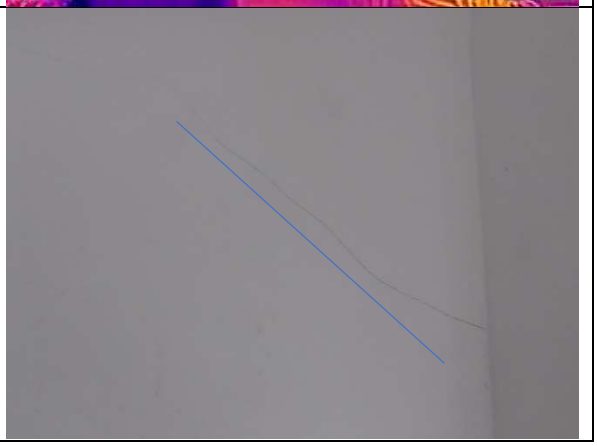
Attic room – the ceiling has been damaged where the light fitting has been replaced and there are some areas of hairline cracking and poorly finished paintwork. Example photos below.	
	
Attic room – the pitches do not appear to have been insulated.	

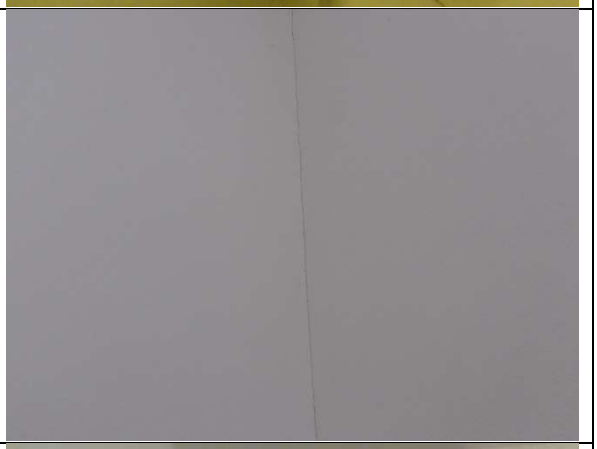
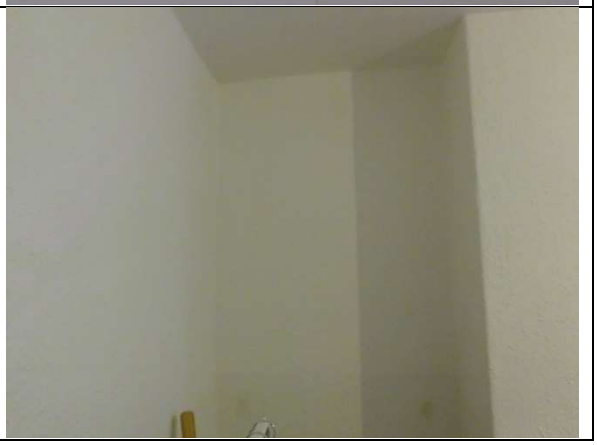
Bathroom – there are some areas of peeling paint around the ceiling, likely as a result of a build-up of condensation due to inadequate heating and ventilation. See comments below on ventilation.	
	
First-floor rear bedroom – there are some areas where the fixings have popped through the face of the plasterboard. These should be repaired.	
Kitchen – there is staining on the wall and ceiling above the extractor hood as this is not an externally exhausting model. The filters need to be cleaned and the grease cleaned away.	
Living room – the ceiling has been overboarded and skimmed – this is not the best job and the outer profile of the coving has been lost in places.	

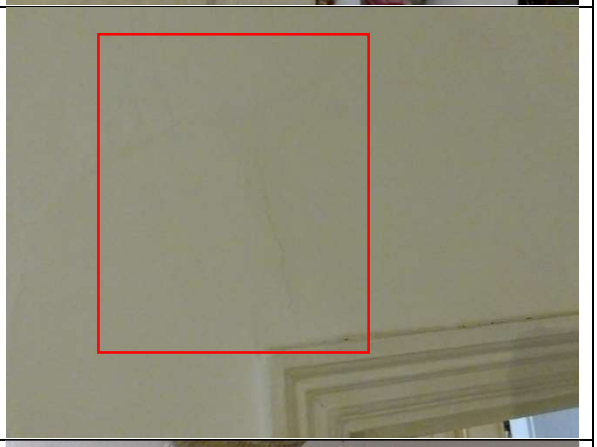
5.5.2 Walls and Partitions

The internal walls are a mix of stud/dot and dab and solid construction all with a gypsum plaster skim. There are some hairline cracks in the plaster in some rooms. As with the ceilings, these can be filled in when you re-decorate, but some will likely reappear. There are also isolated areas where the plaster sounded hollow when knocked, these areas will need patch repairing when the rooms are redecorated.

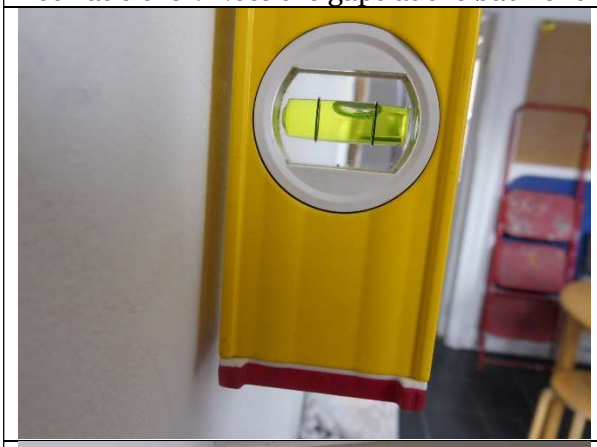
See our comments above in Sections 1.9.3 and 1.9.4.

Attic room – the front stud wall is out of plumb in places. The other areas we inspected were generally plumb.	
	 
Attic room – the chimney alcoves have been boarded out and the wall skimmed – note the cooler area where the stack brickwork is and the lighter areas where it is stud.	
Second-floor staircase – there is a hairline crack in the plaster running front to back.	

Bathroom – the walls are generally plumb; however, the surface finishes are not all flat, note the gap at the rear of the level.	
Bathroom – there are some areas of peeling paint around the walls. This is likely a result of condensation building up due to inadequate heating and ventilation.	
Front bedroom – there is a hairline crack in the plaster where the stud wall meets the front elevation.	
First-floor rear bedroom – two of the walls are finished in woodchip wallpaper which can be very difficult to remove. Apologies, this is difficult to pick out in the photo.	

First-floor rear bedroom – the chimney breast appears a little out of plumb, however, we could not get the level completely flat on the woodchip paper.	
First-floor rear bedroom – the wall is a little damaged above the door frame and needs repair and redecoration.	
Ground to first-floor staircase – the plaster is damaged around the top of the stairs. This should be repaired.	

Kitchen – the walls are generally out of plumb, however, most of the surface finishes were not flat either. Note the gaps at the back of the level.




Living room – passageway wall – there were two areas of hairline cracking towards the front of the room. This may be as a result of the abovementioned cracked lintel or the material being very brittle and the house moving a little. The area should be recorded, repaired and monitored going forward.

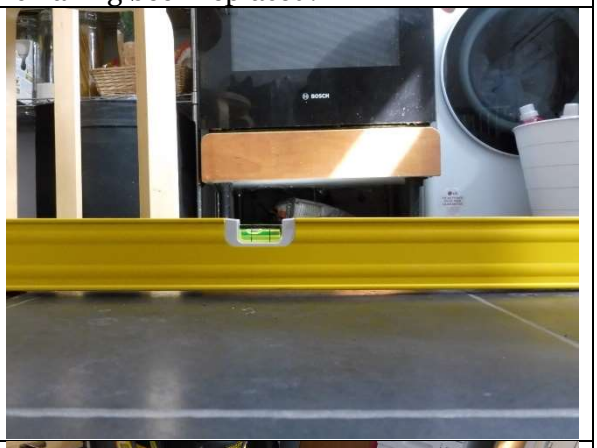
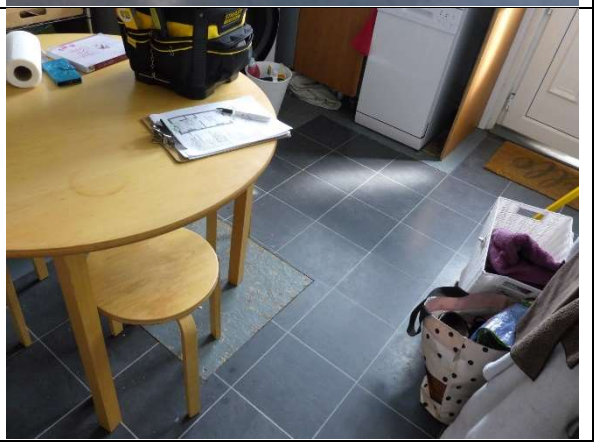

Living room – the walls were generally plumb, however not all of the surface finishes were flat. Note the gap at the back of the spirit level.	

5.5.3 Floors

The floors are of suspended timber construction. Suspended timber floors require adequate ventilation to prevent the build-up of moisture which creates the ideal conditions for timber decay and insect attack. Sub-floor ventilation is detailed further in Section 5.6.4 – Ventilation.

Attic floor – the floor is out of level c. 5 mm front to back.	
Landing – the floors are uneven front-to-back and side-to-side. Likely as a result of undersized timbers/missing noggins/reconfiguration and service penetrations.	
	

Bathroom – note that there is no floor covering down in the bathroom. The surface timber is moisture-damaged in places. Ideally, there should be a water-impermeable covering down across the bathroom floor.	
	
Front bedroom – the floor is slightly out of level side-to-side.	

First-floor rear bedroom – the floor is slightly out of level side-to-side.	
Kitchen – there are two types of floors in the kitchen – painted OSB/chipboard and laminate flooring. The kitchen floor really needs an impermeable floor covering putting down on it. The floor is out of level and deflecting in areas front to back. See our comments below in Section 5.5.7 on this having been replaced.	
	
	

Living room – the floor was slightly out of level side-to-side.	

[redacted]

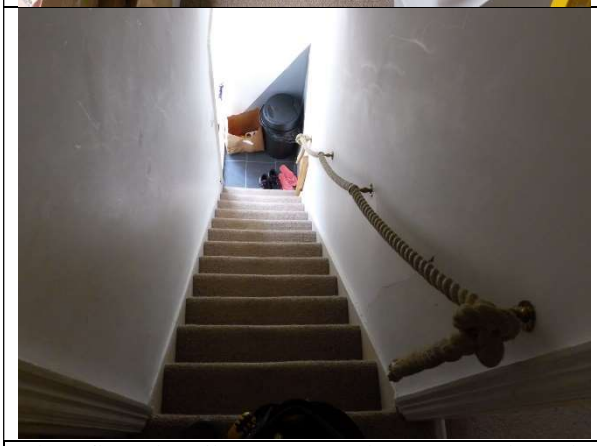
5.5.4 Internal Joinery

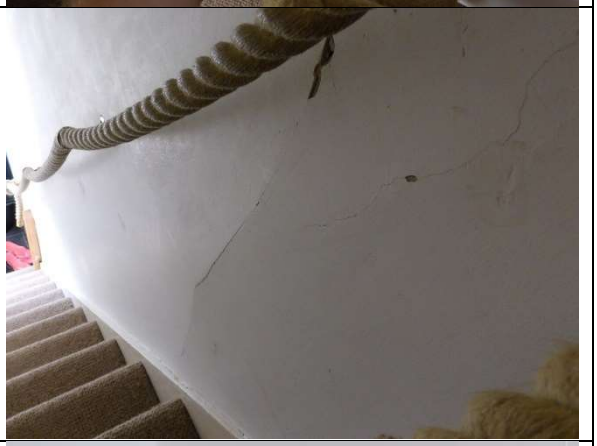
The property had two timber staircases which were carpeted so restricted our inspection from the top side.

Generally, the internal joinery was in tired condition with the exception of the first-floor doors which are a more recent addition, however, have been left unfinished.

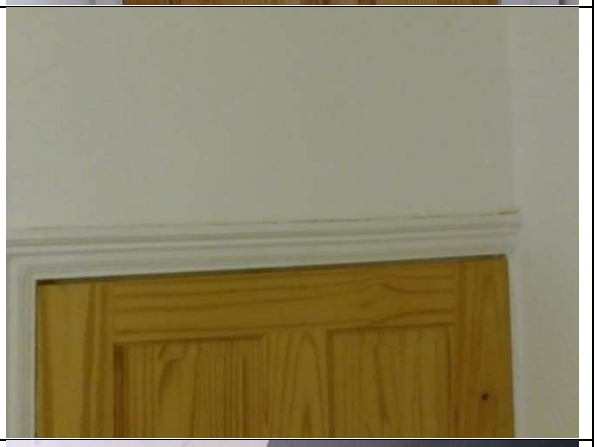
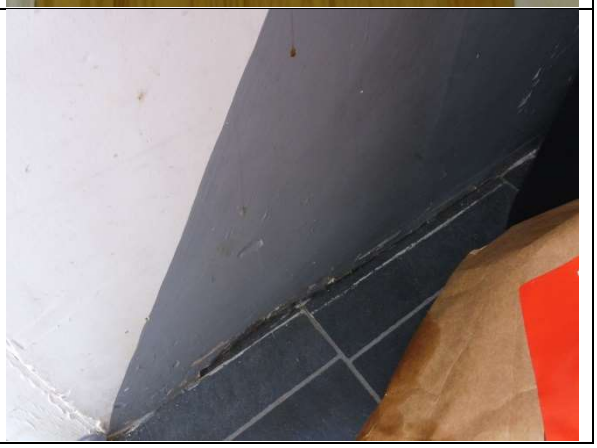
Staircases – there was no 'proper' banister on both sets of stairs, just the rope arrangement that is in the photos below. This does not comply with Building Regulations and consideration should be given to replacing it with a compliant banister on both flights.

The kite winders on the second-floor staircase creak excessively, perhaps as a result of expansion caused by the historic leak detailed below in Section 5.6.3. A suitably competent joiner may be able to improve the creaking.





First floor landing up to attic room – there is no fire door/protected escape and the door does not sit square in the frame.

Front bedroom - the door is a little too small for the frame and there is a gap at the top.	
First-floor rear bedroom – the door is a little too small for the frame and there is a gap at the top.	
Ground floor – there is no skirting board around the bottom of the stairs.	

5.5.5 Fireplaces, Chimneys and Flues

There is a wood-burning stove in the living room, and the remaining hearths have been blocked up.

If you wish to re-instate heating appliances in the redundant fireplaces, the original flues will likely need lining and advice should be sought from a suitably qualified HETAS installer.

Flue ventilation is detailed in Section 5.6.4 – Ventilation.

5.5.6 Appliances and Fittings

We do not inspect any appliances and their service feeds as part of the survey. If you require assurances as to their condition and functionality, we recommend that you engage the services of a suitably qualified domestic appliance specialist.

Built-in fittings can sometimes conceal defects such as condensation or damaged plasterwork and if removed care should be taken. All built-in fittings should be suitably ventilated to prevent the build-up of stale air and condensation.

During our inspection, we inspected fittings and noted the following:

Bathroom – there was hot and cold water from the sink and bath taps and the toilet flushed OK. The shower was not tested.

Kitchen – there was hot and cold water from the kitchen tap.

Bathroom – the seal around the shower screen is not the best.	
Kitchen – there are areas of water damage to the timber worktop. This should be rubbed back and treated.	
	

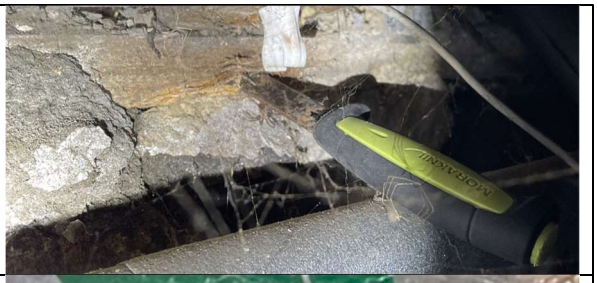
Kitchen – one of the hob burner controllers has been taped over. This should be inspected by a suitable qualified gas engineer before use.	

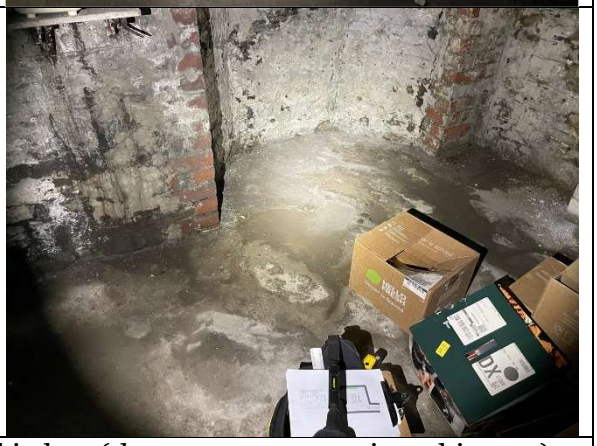
[redacted]

5.5.7 Cellars

Cellars are not habitable spaces and some moisture is to be expected. Cellars (and sub-floor areas) must be adequately ventilated to prevent timber decay and to ensure that the conditions for insect attack are not created.

Note that the access stairs down to the cellar are steep and narrow.	
The living room floor/cellar ceiling joist bays have been insulated with several different materials including PIR board, polystyrene and some sort of blanket wrapped in plastic sheeting. These materials are inappropriate and have been pushed up hard against the underside of the flooring, with no ventilation gap (as specified in Building Regulations). We recommend that this insulation is removed and replaced with a more suitable product such as one hundred per cent sheep wool.	
	
The bay window floor joists have been replaced at some point. We inspected a sample of the floor joists and did not note any areas of timber decay or insect attack...	

… other than the timber barer that some of the joists along the right-hand elevation sit on. This timber is softening and there is some minor decay. The debris around this needs to be cleared and the ventilation improved to give the timber a chance of surviving. If not, the floor will need to be propped and the timber bearer replaced.	
Some of the joist ends have been coated with some sort of preservative. We do not recommend this as it can trap moisture and cause the timber to decay.	
Example of timber decay to the shelving. We recommend these are removed.	
Left-hand side of the bay window – there is a small gap where the bay window and front elevation abut. This should be recorded and monitored going forward. No repairs are required unless active movement is established, however, you may wish to tidy up the abutment by raking out and repointing.	

There are areas of damage to the surface coatings around the cellar. Loose areas should be knocked off to prevent them from holding moisture.	
There are signs of historic standing water staining on the cellar floor. The floor was generally touch dry at the time of our inspection.	

A photo taken of the sub-floor area under the kitchen (there was no access into this area). From what we can see, it looks like the floor structure has been rebuilt at some point.

5.6 Moisture, Damp and Ventilation

Thermo-hygrometer readings were taken in each room as per the below table. Depending on the external conditions, acceptable base readings are 15° with a relative humidity of 50% and absolute humidity of c. 7 g/m³ (around a teaspoon full). When the air reaches > 12 g/m³ it is wet.

	Temperature °C	Relative Humidity %	Dew Point °C	Absolute Humidity g/m³
External reading (11:35)	20.5	54.9	11.1	9.78
Cellar	17.1	70.8	11.7	10.32
Ground Floor				
Kitchen	20.6	55.6	11.4	9.96
Living Room	21.2	55.4	11.9	10.27
First Floor				
Front Bedroom	19.7	61.0	12.0	10.40
Rear Bedroom	19.8	59.6	11.7	10.21
Bathroom	19.8	60.5	11.9	15.51
Second Floor				
Attic Room	19.7	62.3	12.3	10.63

Relative Humidity/RH is the measure of the saturation of the air at the current ambient temperature and is expressed as a percentage of the air saturation/%. When the relative humidity starts getting above 70%, there is a significantly increased chance of condensation forming on surfaces when they reach their dew point. When the long-term relative humidity starts getting above 80%, there is a significantly increased chance of timber decay occurring. With the exception of the cellar, the relative humidity was acceptable. Ventilation in the cellar needs to be improved to bring the atmospheric conditions in line with the external conditions.

Absolute Humidity/AH is a measure of the actual amount of water vapour in the air regardless of temperature and is expressed as grams per cubic meter/g/m³. A dry house would usually have an absolute humidity of around 7 g/m³, however, this would depend entirely on the external conditions at the time of the reading. On the day of the inspection, the AH was 9.78 g/m³ and with the exception of the bathroom, the internal conditions were broadly in line with this. Ventilation in the bathroom needs to be improved to exhaust moist air externally and reduce the risk of condensation becoming a problem.

The temperatures in all areas tested were well above their respective dew points so there should be little chance of condensation forming. When the surface temperature falls closer to the dew point, the relative humidity rises and there is a greater chance of condensation forming on surfaces.

A Note on Interstitial Condensation

There is a temperature gradient through all building materials where temperatures on both sides are different. If warm, moist air within the building permeates the building fabric (as a gas), at some point, it will cool to the dew point, condense as a liquid and give rise to interstitial condensation. This is the reason why humidity control with adequate heating and ventilation is of great importance.

A Note on Electronic Resistance Meters

Electronic resistance meters, sometimes incorrectly referred to as 'damp meters', are often incorrectly used to 'diagnose' moisture-related symptoms. Advice and 'remedial' works specified as a result of their readings should be disregarded. We only use these meters to identify dry timber.

5.6.1 Damp Proof Course

The property was constructed before the mainstream introduction of damp-proof courses and there was no need to retrofit one.

With the correct knowledge and materials, there is never any need to retrofit any type of damp-proof course to a traditionally constructed building.

The front section of the passageway – an attempt has been made to retrofit engineering bricks, likely to act as a damp-proof course. This work has been undertaken to a poor standard and a more sympathetic repair should be undertaken to this area.	
A retrofit chemical injection damp proof course has been 'installed' around the property. This has not been installed at the correct height – (it should be 150 mm above ground level, it is only 40 mm above ground level in places), it is bridged by the garden walls at the front and rear of the passageway and has been installed to a poor standard, damaging many bricks. In the short term, the drill holes should be appropriately pointed up and the bricks repaired. See our comments on mortars and brick repair above in Section 1.7.	
	

[redacted]

5.6.2 Ground Levels

The hard surfacing surrounding the property generally fell away, however, as most of this is damaged, it was hard to be particularly scientific about this.

External ground levels should be at least 150 mm below internal floor levels. During our inspection, we recorded ground levels as follows:

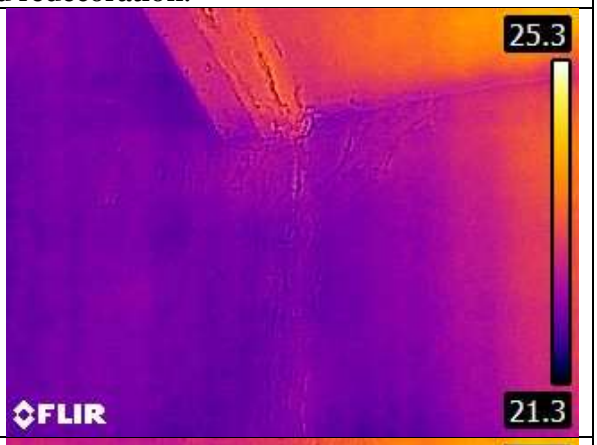
- Living room bay window – the external ground levels are c. 110 mm below the internal floor levels.
- Living room door – the external ground levels are c. 120 mm below the internal floor levels.
- Kitchen – the external ground levels are c. 120 mm below the internal floor levels.

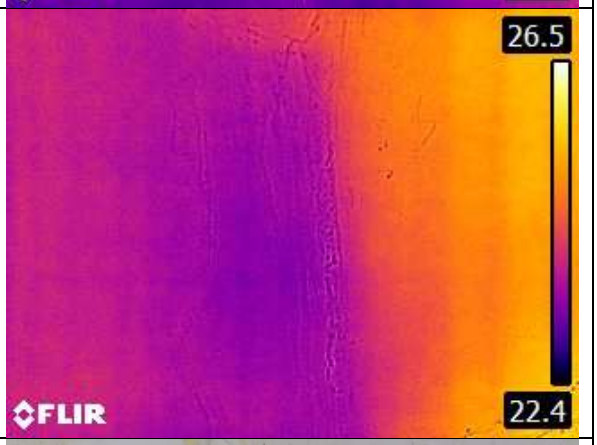
This should be addressed when the various areas of damaged hard surfacing are replaced.

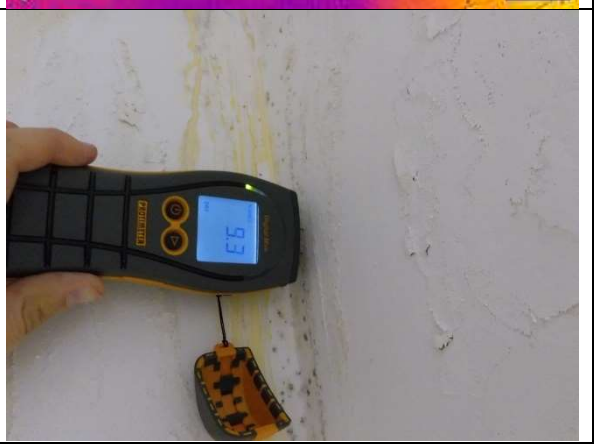
5.6.3 Moisture

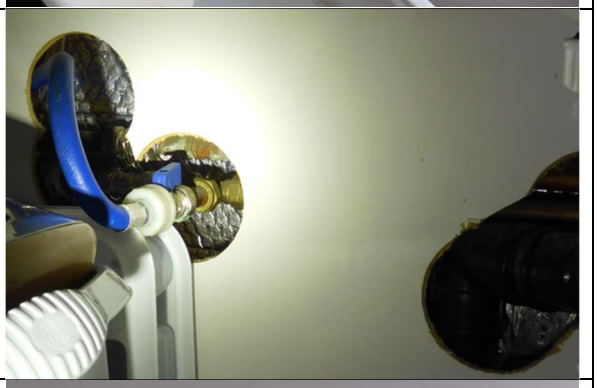
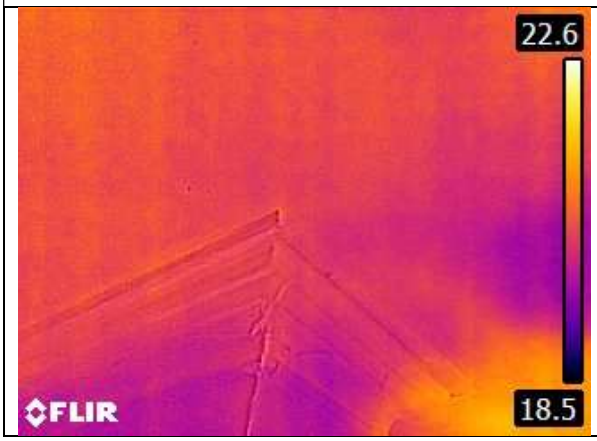
As traditionally constructed houses are becoming more air-tight, we are seeing increasing problems with condensation due to inadequate heating and ventilation combined with lifestyle issues. Black spore mould is usually (but not always) a result of condensation building up and if you experience this, heating and ventilation need to be better managed.

First-floor landing – there is evidence of moisture-related damage on the rear elevation, this is likely as a result of a historic gutter leak. The surface was dry to the touch at the time of our inspection and there was nothing unusual on the thermal imaging or electronic resistance meter. The area will need repair and redecoration.







First floor rear bedroom – there is mildew building up on the window frame as a result of inadequate heating and ventilation. Heating and ventilation should be improved in the short term.	
Kitchen – visible through holes in the back of the kitchen units is some sort of membrane on the internal leaf of the external wall. This was likely added as an ill-advised 'damp treatment' and should be removed when the kitchen is next refurbished and the wall re-inspected.	
There is moisture-related damage in the area from the passageway wall to the right-hand edge of the bay window. This could explain why the bay window has been altered. There was nothing unusual on the thermal imaging at the time of our inspection.	
	

5.6.4 Ventilation

Ventilation will only function effectively if there is a replacement air source. Where mechanical ventilation is installed in kitchens and bathrooms, doors should be undercut by at least 10 mm or a secondary passive vent should be added.

Roofspace – appropriate ventilation must be considered when the re-roofing works are planned. Please speak to us if you need any further advice in this respect.

Bathroom – the mechanical ventilation in the bathroom is considered to be inadequate. We recommend that more powerful unit is considered. To achieve their quoted efficiency, the door will usually need to be undercut by 10 – 15 mm. We recommend humidity-controlled centrifugal units.

Kitchen – the extractor fan should be replaced with an externally exhausting unit so that the moist air generated from cooking is sent outside rather than being left to circulate around the house.

Chimneys – all flues require constant ventilation to allow evaporation of moisture which if present, can track through the masonry and into the surrounding walls bringing with it impurities and leaving staining when it evaporates into the room. You should reinstate fireplaces or install adequate-sized room vents to all redundant flues (kitchen and first-floor bedrooms) and have them swept prior. They will then provide valuable passive stack ventilation to the rooms they serve.

Sub-floor – there is inadequate ventilation to the cellar and rear sub-floor void. An additional air brick should be installed in the bay window and then additional brocks at 1200 mm centres down the passageway and across the rear elevation.

Front bedroom – the fireplace has been removed and the flue blocked up. This should be appropriately ventilated in the short term.	
First floor rear bedroom – the fireplace has been removed and the flue blocked up and a radiator placed over. This should be appropriately ventilated in the short term.	

[redacted]

Kitchen - the fireplace has been removed and the flue blocked up. The redundant flue should be appropriately ventilated in the short term.	
Living room – the built-in window seat and cupboard should both be adequately ventilated into the room/cellar.	
	

The two sub-floor vents in the bay window need to be cleared of debris to improve their efficiency in the short term. The vents are in the photos below, external and internal.

The coal hole vent has been blocked by a door. This should be removed and the vent cleared of debris to improve its efficiency in the short term.

Rear elevation – the sub-floor ventilation brick in the rear elevation is blocked by a plant.

The plant should be removed and the vent cleared out as soon as possible.

5.7 External Areas, Flooding and Radon

You should be aware that some trees and vegetation are growing over into the property from neighbouring sites. These could compromise the physical boundaries of the property and should be kept well-managed.

We did not note any Japanese Knotweed within the boundaries of the rear garden. We have been unable to inspect neighbouring properties.

5.7.1 External Areas

The front garden was overgrown which has restricted our inspection of this area.

Front garden walls – there is damage to the stone coping stones, the front and return walls are not plumb and there are areas around the top courses that are displaced.

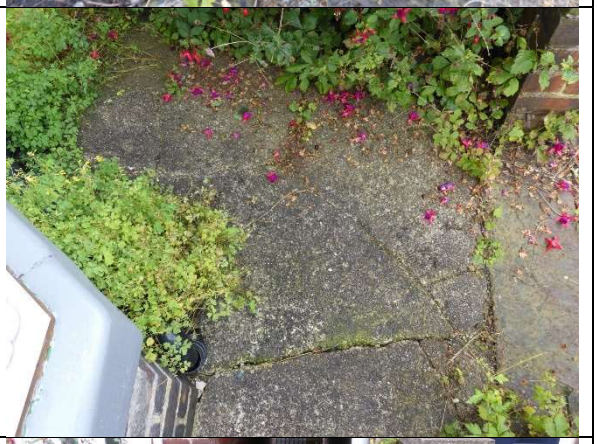
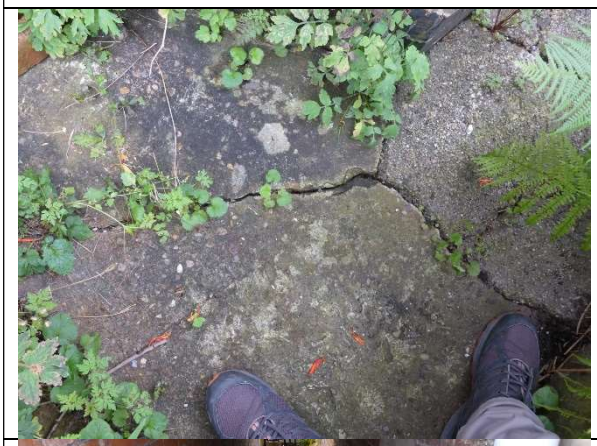
At some point, some localised rebuilding of these walls will be required.

We have included some example photos below.



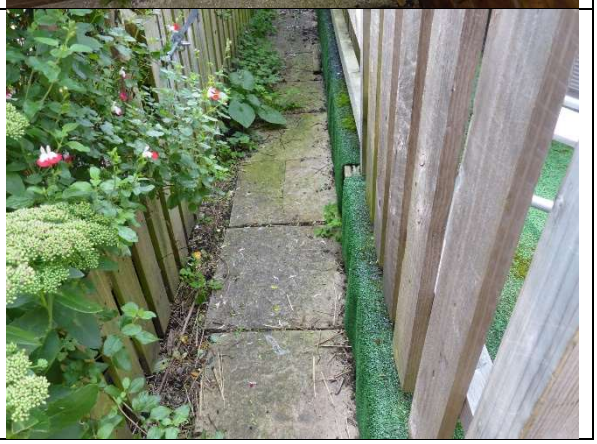



[redacted]

Ferrous fixings should be removed as they will continue to expand and jack the wall as they corrode.	
The surfacing in the front garden, along the passageway and the rear pathway/yard is in poor condition and will need to be taken up and re-laid in the not-too-distant future. This is likely to be expensive and disruptive work.	
	
	

[redacted]

Overhead photo of the rear garden.

The gate into the garden is damaged and needs to be repaired/replaced. 
Left-hand side path – there are several damaged paving slabs along this path. These should be replaced in the short-medium term depending on if the pathway will be used. 

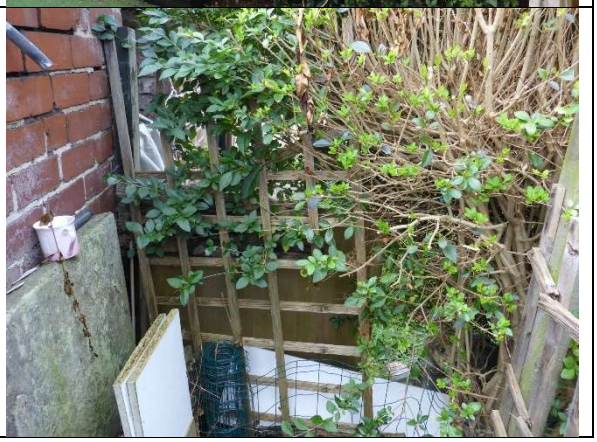
[redacted]

The step up to the deck area is decaying and will need to be replaced if the area is to be used safely.	
The decking and associated fencing and imitation grass are in poor condition. Several areas of the decking are unsafe to walk on, however, we have not been able to properly ascertain the condition of all the decking as the imitation grass is mechanically affixed down in most areas. Works to make the decking and fencing safe should be undertaken before the area is used on a regular basis.	
	
	




Debris restricted our inspection of the rear right-hand corner of the yard area. This should be cleared and disposed of.


Along the left-hand boundary, there are plants growing over from the neighbouring garden.


The right-hand boundary is formed of a hedge. Your legal advisor should establish the boundary line and advise you of any maintenance responsibilities. This hedge is close to the rear elevation and the main drainage run. The hedge must be kept well managed to mitigate against root damage to the drainage and house.	
At the rear of the right-hand boundary in front of the outhouses, there is a piece of trellis used to close the gap where the hedge is thin – this is in poor condition and will need to be replaced in the short term to maintain a secure boundary.	

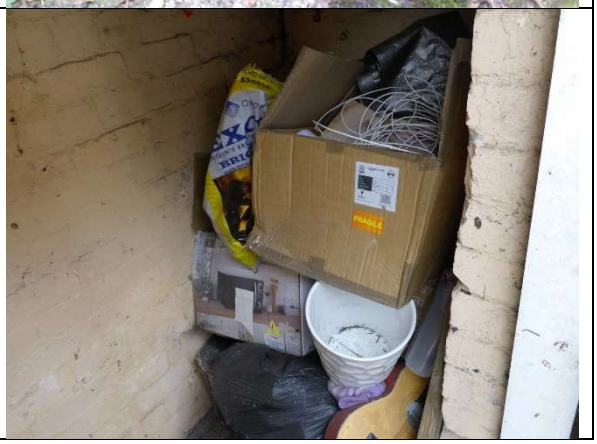
[redacted]

5.7.2 Garages and Outbuildings

There are two outbuildings at the end of the garden, we have only been able to get access to the right-hand building. Your legal advisor should check that both of these buildings belong to the subject property as there are no outbuildings in the left-hand neighbouring garden.

The timeframe of the works to the outhouse depends on the value and usefulness you place on them.

Outhouse roof – there are several slipped slates and the ridge needs to be repointed.	
The areas of missing and damaged verge pointing need to be repaired.	
Note that there is no guttering on the outhouses. We recommend that guttering is added before winter and that the fall pipe is directed into the mains drainage or a suitably located soak away.	

There are areas of the wall where the pointing has washed out. These areas should be properly raked out and repointed.	
The lower section of the right-hand door has been lost to decay and needs repairing/replacing.	
Possessions restricted our inspection of the outhouse somewhat.	

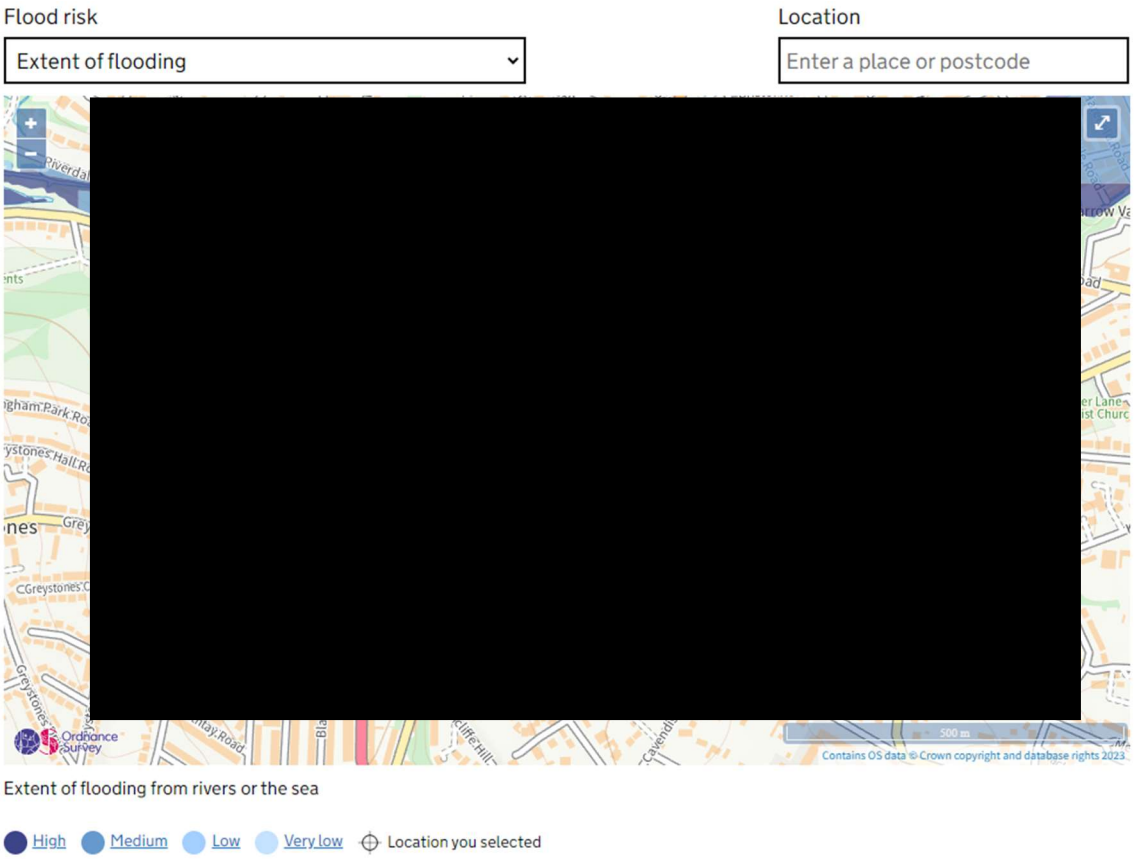
[redacted]

5.7.3 Flooding

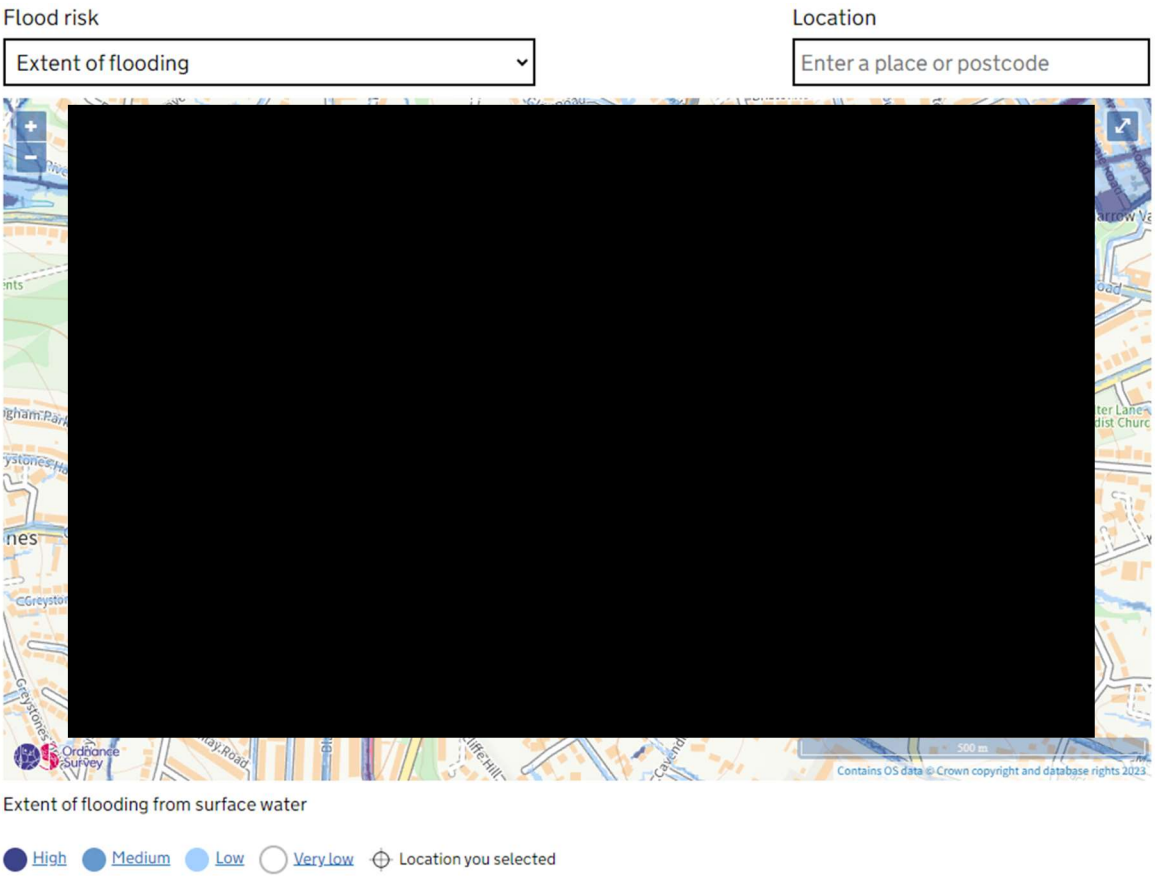
A full flood assessment has not been carried out. We have referenced the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning; it identifies the property is in an area of very low risk. Please see the maps below:

[redacted]

Rivers and sea risk	**Very low risk** Very low risk means that this area has a chance of flooding of less than 0.1% **each year**.
Surface water risk	**Very low risk** Very low risk means that this area has a chance of flooding of less than 0.1% **each year**. Lead local flood authorities (LLFA) manage the risk from surface water flooding and may hold more detailed information. Your LLFA is **Sheffield**.
Reservoir risk	Flooding from reservoirs is unlikely in this area
Groundwater risk	Flooding from groundwater is unlikely in this area



[redacted]



More information can be found here: https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/postcode.

Accessed: 24th August 2023.

[redacted]

5.7.4 Radon

A full Radon risk assessment has not been carried out. We have referenced the UK Radon website to review the radon risk which is shown as 5-10%.

More information can be found here: https://www.ukradon.org/information/ukmaps.

Accessed: 24th August 2023.

UK Radon, a part of Public Health England, does, however, recommend that all properties are tested for radon. Your legal advisor should ask the owner if any testing has taken place. If not, you can conduct a test yourself for around £50 with a home testing kit from UK Radon, see: https://www.ukradon.org/information/measuringradon.

5.8 Services

Limitations to our Inspection

We do not perform or comment on design calculations or test the service installations or appliances in any way. We also do not comment on compliance with current regulations. Any comments made below are to draw your attention to things that in our opinion may require further investigation, as opposed to statements of fact.

If the present owner is unable to provide evidence of appropriate installation and maintenance, or if you require assurance of the services and appliances' condition and safety, we recommend that service installations are inspected and tested as follows:

Electrical installations: A suitably qualified member of NICEIC.

Gas: A suitably qualified member of Gas Safe.

Drainage: A contractor familiar with the requirements under Approved Document H.

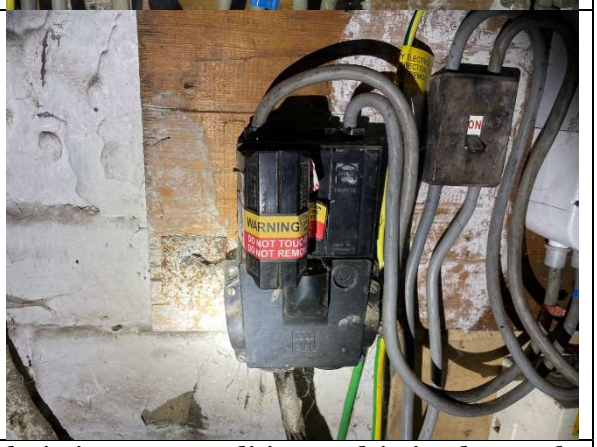
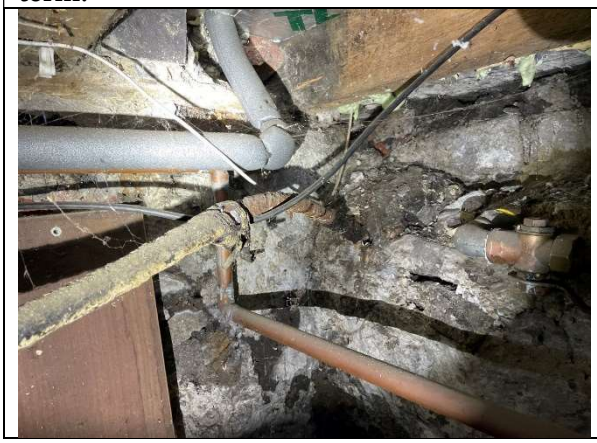
Security – the property has a burglar alarm fitted, however, the vendor advised that this does not function correctly and needs to be re-set by a professional.

The smoke alarm on the second floor looks very old. The smoke alarm on the first floor doesn't have its green flashing light signalling all is well. The smoke alarm on the ground floor is missing.	
	

[redacted]

5.8.1 Electricity

Safety Warning: Electrical Safety First recommends that you should get a registered electrician to check the property and its electrical fittings every ten years, or on change of occupancy. All electrical installation work undertaken after 1st January 2005 should have appropriate certification. For more advice, contact Electrical Safety First (https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/). Your legal advisor should obtain satisfactory documentation for any electrical alterations. If this is not available, a comprehensive Fixed Wire Test should be undertaken by a suitably qualified electrician before the exchange of contracts.

Mains electricity is connected to the property and the electricity meter is located on the rear wall of the cellar.	
The main incoming fuse does not have a sticker stating the ampage of the incoming supply.	
The sheath around the incoming mains supply is in poor condition and is inadequately supported. The cable should be inspected by the electricity distributor and properly affixed in the short term.	
	

The distribution board is located on the rear wall of the cellar. There is a sticker stating that the next service was recommended on 1st October 2015.	
	 
Cellar head – example of the poor organisation of the electrics. These should be tidied up by a suitably qualified electrician when the electrics are tested. Also, note in this picture that the central heating pipework is not insulated. We recommend it is insulated to improve its efficiency.	
An example of where a backbox and face plate have been plastered right up to. This is poor practice.	
The original redundant electricity supply is affixed across the rear of the property.	

5.8.2 Gas

Safety warning: All gas appliances and equipment should be regularly inspected, tested, maintained and serviced by a registered 'competent person' in line with the manufacturer's instructions. This is important to make sure that the equipment is working correctly, to limit the risk of fire and carbon monoxide poisoning, and to prevent carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from leaking into the air. For more advice, contact the Gas Safe Register (https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/). We recommend that the installations are inspected, tested and any defects remedied before the exchange of contracts.

There were no carbon monoxide alarms at the property at the time of our inspection. We recommend that mains-powered alarms are installed at the property in line with the manufacturer's guidelines and tested on a regular basis.

The property is connected to mains gas, the gas meter is located on the front wall of the cellar.	
The brackets under the gas meter are corroded and may need to be replaced.	
The bar isolator moved freely at the time of our inspection.	

The gas supply to the living room hearth and the kitchen is not properly supported. Additional pipe clips should be added in the short term.	

[redacted]

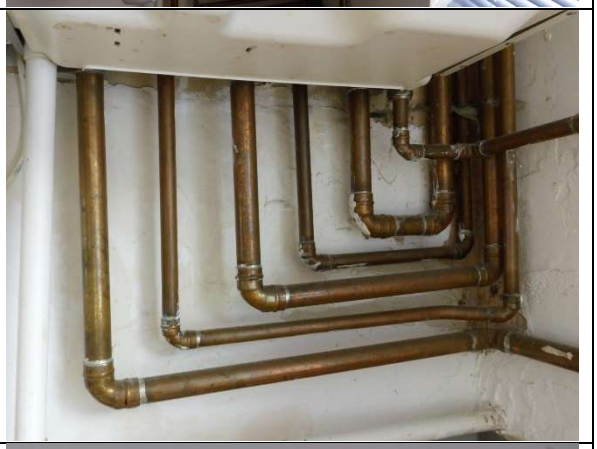
5.8.3 Water

The vendor advised that they are on a Ratable Value for their water as opposed to a meter. The incoming supply pipe is copper which is unusual – we would expect this to be lead or MDPE. This should be checked by the water distributor – Yorkshire Water.

The stop tap is located on the front left-hand wall of the cellar. We could not get the stop tap to turn freely and recommend that this is addressed as soon as possible in case it is needed in an emergency. We recommend that this is clearly labelled and that occupants know where it is in case of emergency.	
Scratch test for copper.	
The water supply pipe is inadequately supported. Additional pipe clips should be added in the short term.	

The supply pipe is crushed where it goes around the chimney breast – this should be addressed in the short term.	

5.8.4 Heating and Hot Water

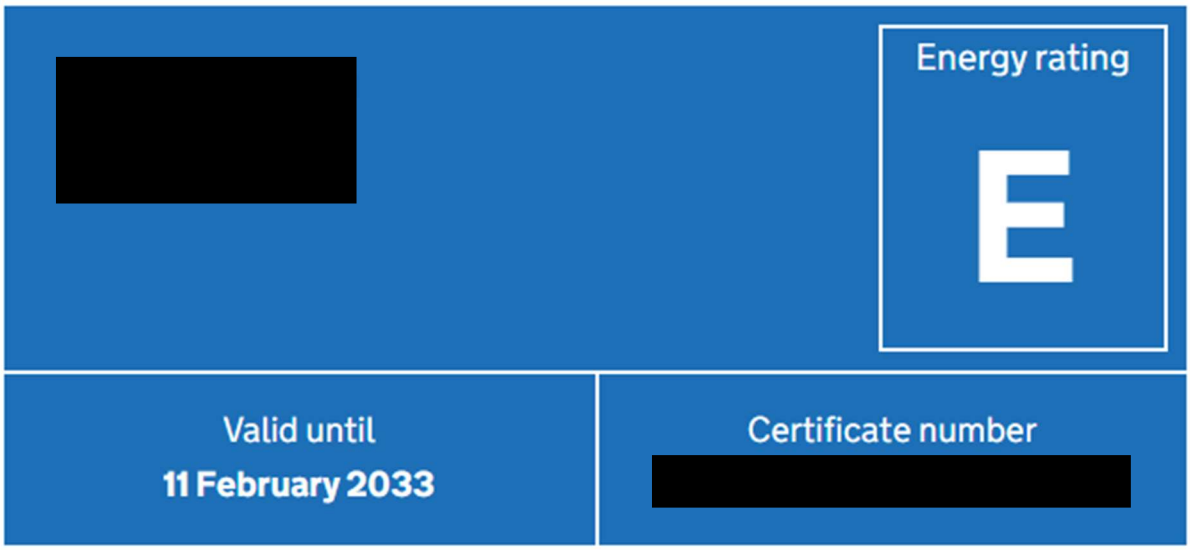
Combination boiler – Worcester Bosch Greenstar 30SI in the kitchen. There were no service stickers or a commissioning certificate on/around the boiler. There was no CO_2 detector near the boiler (or wood-burning stove). Note that none of the pipework we could see has been insulated. We recommend pipework be insulated to improve efficiency.	
	
The thermostat and programmer on the wall in the kitchen.	
The kitchen radiator is in poor condition, likely as a result of being used to dry clothes etc.	

Wood-burning stove - the hearth does not project as far as the door when it is opened to 90°. We think that the hearth should project at least as far as the door to catch any stray embers when the door is opened. We recommend inspection by a suitably qualified HETAS contractor.	

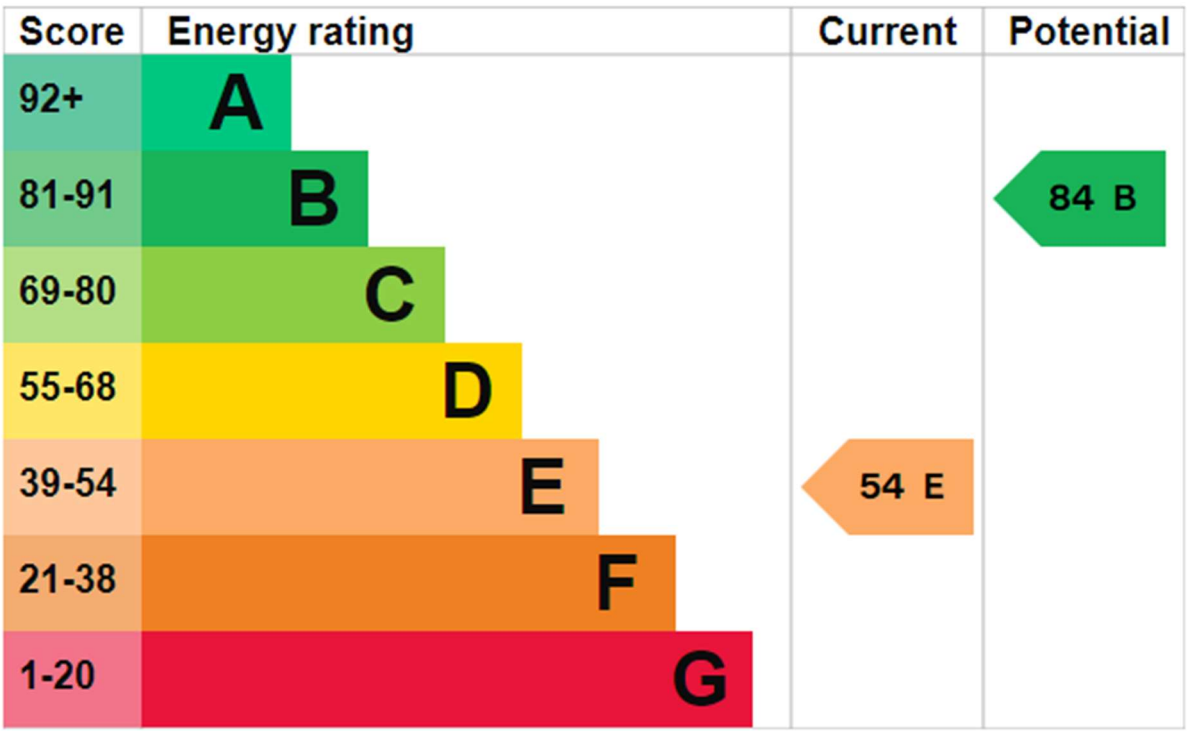
[redacted]

5.8.1 Energy Efficiency

Our professional body requires us to provide you with energy efficiency advice. A copy of the EPC is below:



Property type	Mid-terrace house
Total floor area	78 square metres



Link: https://find-energy-certificate.service.gov.uk/[redacted]

Accessed: 24th August 2023.

From the assessors' assumptions, we comment as follows:

- Room in the roof and suspended floor insulation – this should only be in 100 per cent sheep's wool and there must be a sufficient air gap between the insulation and the roof covering/floor deck. We recommend Sheep Wool Insulation (https://www.sheepwoolinsulation.com/).
- We do not recommend internal or external wall insulation as this can cause subsequent problems with interstitial condensation and in our experience, is usually installed to a poor standard.
- The roof structure needs to be examined by a structural engineer before any solar water heating or PV panels are considered. Future maintenance and bird nesting also need to be thought about.
- There is no reference to the stove in the living room in the EPC.

6.0 Legal Items

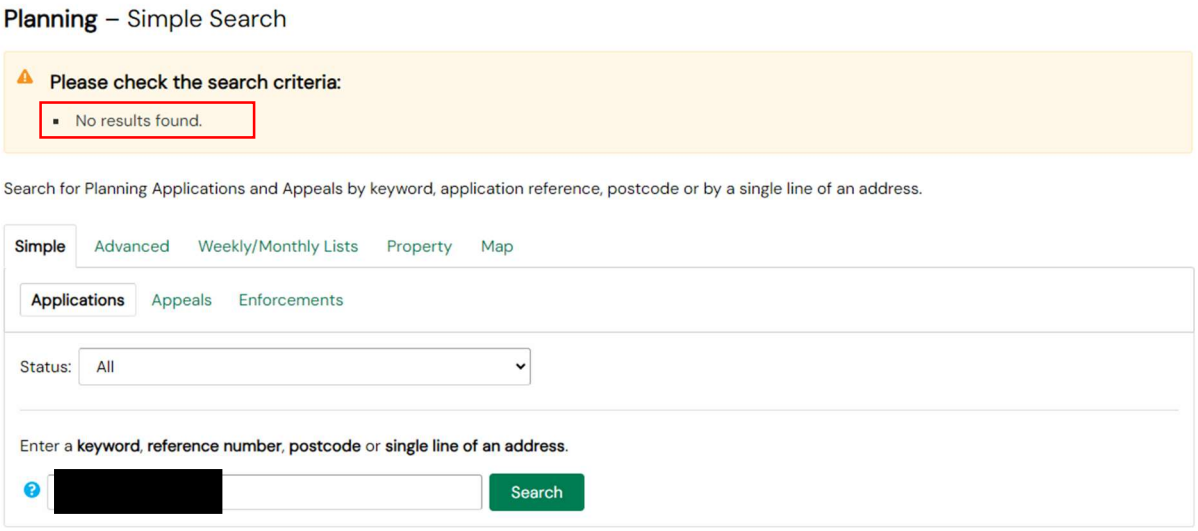
We recommend your legal advisor investigates the following areas and that you are happy with the findings before entering into a legal commitment to purchase:

1. The exact locations of the boundaries and responsibility for their maintenance.
2. The access arrangements and maintenance responsibilities for the passageway.
3. The maintenance arrangements for the shared areas of guttering and fall pipes.
4. Documentation for the neighbouring properties' soil vent pipe that is affixed to the front elevation of the subject property.
5. Any maintenance arrangements for the shared chimney stack.
6. Documentation for the replacement windows and doors.
7. That both outbuildings belong to the subject property.
8. All documentation related to the attic room.
9. Certification for gas, solid fuel appliance and electrical works.
10. Any historic planning permissions or building control certification that is not on the Local Authority's website and confirmation that any required conditions have been discharged.
11. Details of any onerous covenants or rights of way including the passageway and rear garden access.
12. Satisfactory copies of all Party Wall documents.
13. Details of whether the property is in an area protected by Article 4 Direction.
14. Details of any neighbour disputes.
15. Searches for flooding, mining activity and Radon gas.
16. Records of any noise or air quality issues in the area.
17. Any chancel repair liability or other local repair liabilities.
18. The existence of any local planning applications which may affect your future enjoyment of the property.
19. That house insurance is available at an acceptable rate.
20. Flying freeholds or submerged freeholds.
21. Whether the property is 'locally listed' if it is not statutorily listed.
22. The presence of protected species, for example, bats, badgers and newts.
23. Green Deal measures, feed-in tariffs and roof leases.

6.1 Planning

We strongly advise your legal advisor to check historical planning information with the Local Authority.

We have undertaken a basic search on the Local Authority's website which yielded no records:



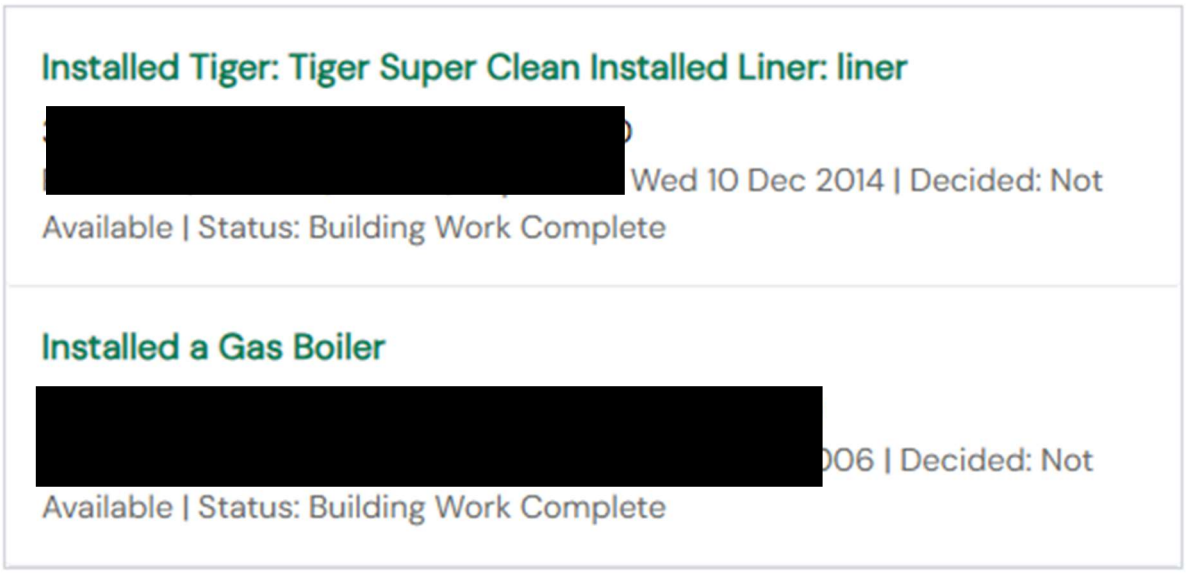
Link: https://planningapps.sheffield.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage.

Accessed: 24th August 2023.

6.2 Building Regulations

We strongly advise your legal advisor to check historic building control information with the Local Authority and obtain a final/completion certificate for any works that have been undertaken at the property.

We have undertaken a search on the Local Authorities portal and this yielded the following results:



One record for the flu liner for the stove in the living room and one record for the replacement gas boiler. Both of these were self-certified by the fitters under the Government's 'Competent Persons Scheme' accreditation programme.

Your legal advisor should obtain service records for the stove and boiler and we recommend co2 detectors are added in both rooms following the manufacturer's instructions.

Link: https://planningapps.sheffield.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple&searchType=BuildingControl.

Accessed: 24th August 2023.

Where there are no records for works that require consent, we recommend that a Regularisation Certificate is obtained prior to the exchange of contracts.

6.3 Mining

According to The Coal Authority website, there are no records of mining activity in the area. Your legal advisor should make a formal request for this information from The Coal Authority and further information and details should be provided in the searches they carry out. You should discuss the findings of the search with your legal advisor and ensure you are happy with the findings before committing to purchase.

Credit: The Coal Authority

For further information please see: http://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/coalauthority/home.html.

Accessed: 24th August 2023.

6.4 Bats

It should be noted that all bats and their roosts are protected under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). It is an offence to kill, injure, disturb or handle any bats or to disturb their roosts (even those that are currently inactive).

Any offence could result in prosecution and a significant fine. Consideration should be given to bats when carrying out any work, especially to roofs, eaves, external walls and joinery and outbuildings.

Further information on bats can be provided by:

- The Local Authority;
- The Bat Conservation Trust who can be contacted on 0345 1300 228;
- Historic England – https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/building-works-and-bats/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=brand.

6.5 Asbestos

This survey does not include an asbestos inspection and falls outside The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. Given the age of the building, asbestos may be present. A Refurbishment or Demolition survey should be undertaken before carrying out any repair or refurbishment work to the property.

7.0 Risks

Our professional body requires us to advise you of risks. Purchasing and living in any property involves a certain amount of risk.

Few aspects of old buildings are likely compliant with modern building regulations, nor is there any requirement for them to (in most circumstances).

7.1 Risks to the Building

- Roof repairs
- Cracked lintel
- Drainage
- Garden walls
- Attic conversion
- Absence of smoke alarms

7.2 Risks to the Grounds

- Drainage
- Garden wall
- Uneven paving

7.4 Risks to People

- The possible presence of lead paints.
- The absence of main-powered interlinked smoke detectors.
- The absence of CO2 alarms in all rooms with solid fuel/fossil fuel burning appliances.
- The absence of testing/safety records for services and appliances.
- Asbestos
- The absence of safety glass in the bay window.

8.0 Glossary

Below is a glossary of terms that may have been used in this report. This is a general list of terms that I include in all of my reports and is not specific to this report/property.

Aggregate:	Pebbles, shingle, gravel etc. used in the manufacture of concrete, with a binder in a mortar and as fill in land drains and soakaways etc.
Airbrick:	Perforated brick used for ventilation, especially to floor voids, cavities and roof spaces.
Apron:	Leadwork which lays flat down the roof slope in front of the chimney base (see also 'soakers and 'flashing').
Architrave:	Joinery mouldings around a window or doorway.
Arris:	The sharp edge at the intersection of two surfaces, normally at 90°.
Asbestos:	Fibrous mineral used in the past in many areas of both domestic and commercial buildings. Asbestos can be a health hazard and specialist advice should be sought if asbestos is found, suspected or if refurbishment or demolition work is to take place.
Asbestos Cement:	Cement with 10-15% asbestos fiber as reinforcement. The finished product is fragile and will not bear heavy weight. Hazardous fibers may be released if cut or drilled and specialist advice should be taken.
Ashlar:	Finely dressed natural stone, the best grade of masonry.
Asphalt:	Black, tar-like substance, strongly adhesive and impervious to moisture when laid. Used on flat roofs and floors. Has a finite life, upstands will slump and the material will degrade over time.
Barge Board:	See 'Verge Board'.
Balanced Flue:	A duct serving some gas appliances which allows air to be drawn to the appliance whilst also allowing fumes to escape.
Beetle Infestation:	Larvae of various species of beetle that tunnel into timber causing damage. Specialist advice is usually required; however, specialist treatment is usually unnecessary.
Benching:	Smoothly contoured concrete slope beside the drainage channel(s) within an inspection chamber. Sometimes also known as 'haunching'.
Bitumen:	Black, sticky substance, related to asphalt. Used in sealants, paints, mineral felts, roofing felts and damp-proof courses.
Breeze Block:	Originally made from cinders ('breeze') – the term is now commonly used to refer to various types of concrete-based building blocks (but not more modern Thermalite type blocks).
Carbonation:	[concrete] A natural process affecting the outer layer of concrete. Metal reinforcement within that layer is liable to early corrosion, with consequent fracturing of the concrete. Specialist repairs are required.
Carbonation:	[non-hydraulic lime] A natural process where lime render/mortar etc. cures through carbonation with air.
Cavity Wall:	Standard modern method of building external walls of houses comprising two leaves of brick or blockwork separated by a gap ('cavity') of c. 50 – 75 mm.

Cavity Wall Insulation: Filling of wall cavities by any of various forms of insulation material. We do not recommend this.

Cavity Wall-Tie: Various forms of metal ties bedded into the inner and outer leaves of cavity walls to strengthen and stabilise the two leaves. Failure by corrosion can result in the wall becoming unstable – specialist replacement ties are then required.

Cesspool: A simple method of drain comprising a holding tank which needs frequent emptying. Not to be confused with a septic tank.

Chipboard: Chips of wood are compressed and glued into sheet form. Cheap method of decking to flat roofs and floors.

Collar: A horizontal timber member affixed between a pair of rafters intended to restrain opposing roof slopes. Absence, removal or weakening can lead to roof spread and wall head deflection.

Combination Boiler: A modern form of gas boiler which activates on demand. With this form of boiler, there is no need for water storage tanks, hot water cylinders etc.

Coping/Coping Stone: Usually stone or concrete, laid on top of a wall as a decorative finish, to shed rainwater to the ground below and to stop rainwater from soaking into the wallhead.

Corbel: Projection of stone, brick, timber or metal jutting out from a wall to support a weight above.

Cornice: Ornamental moulded projection around the top of a building.

Coving: Curved junction between wall and ceiling.

Crack: Cracks or fractures follow the classifications of Building Research Establishment Digest 251. Any remedial action should only be taken after a sufficient period of monitoring and recording:

- Category 0 – hairline cracks less than 0.1mm, classed as negligible. No action is usually required.
- Category 1 – up to 1mm, classed as negligible or very slight: fine cracks which can easily be treated using normal decoration. Damage is generally restricted to internal wall finishes; cracks rarely visible in external brickwork.
- Category 2 – 1mm to 5mm, classed as slight: cracks which are easily filled. Recurrent cracks can be masked by suitable linings. Some external re-pointing may be required to ensure weather-tightness. Doors and windows may stick slightly and require easing and adjusting.
- Category 3 – 5mm to 15mm or several of around 3mm, classed as moderate: cracks which require some opening up and could be patched by a mason. Re-pointing of external brickwork and possibly a small amount of brickwork to be replaced. Doors and windows may stick and service pipes may fracture. Weather-tightness is often impaired.
- Category 4 – 15mm to 25mm, classed as severe: cracks which require breaking out and replacing sections of walls, especially over doors and windows. Window and door frames may be distorted, floors may slope noticeably and walls may lean or bulge. There may be some loss of bearing of beams. Service pipes may be disrupted.

- Category 5 – over 25mm, classed as very severe: cracks which cause structural damage which requires a major repair intervention, involving partial or complete re-building. Beams may lose bearing, walls may require shoring, windows may break and the possibility of structural instability exists

Crack width on its own should not be used as a direct measure of the category.

Dado Rail: Wooden moulding fixed horizontally to a wall, about 1 meter (3ft 4in) above the floor, originally intended to protect the wall against damage by chair-backs.

Damp Proof Course: Layer of impervious material (slate, mineral felt, PVCu etc.)

Deathwatch Beetle: A serious insect pest in structural timbers, usually affects old hardwoods with fungal decay already present and only affects timber which has a moisture content of +17%. Emergence holes are usually 3mm in diameter and circular.

Double Glazing: A method of thermal insulation usually either:

- Sealed unit: two panes of glass fixed and hermetically sealed together; or
- Secondary: in effect a second 'window' placed inside the original window.

Dry Rot: A fungus which attacks structural and joinery timbers, often with devastating results. Flourishes in moist, unventilated areas.

Eaves: The overhanging edge of a roof.

Efflorescence: Salts crystallized on the surface of a wall as a result of moisture evaporation.

Engineering Brick: A particularly strong and dense type of brick, sometimes used as a damp-proof course.

Fascia: The vertical section, usually timber or uPVC at the eaves. Commonly used to mount the gutter support brackets.

Flashing: A building technique used to prevent leakage at a roof joint. Normally metal (lead, zinc, copper) but can be cement, felt or proprietary material. In the case of chimneys and at the junctions of a roof with a wall above it, flashing would overlay the soakers.

Flaunching: Contoured mortar around the base of chimney pots, to secure the pots.

Flue: A smoke duct in a chimney, or a proprietary pipe serving a heat-producing appliance such as a central heating boiler.

Flue Lining: A metal (usually stainless steel) tube within a flue – essential for high-output gas appliances such as boilers.

Foundations: Normally concrete, laid underground as the structural base to a wall. In older buildings, this may take the form of 'footings' made from brick or stone.

Frog: A depression imprinted in the upper surface of a brick, to save clay, reduce weight and increase the strength of the wall. Bricks should always be laid frog uppermost.

Gable: Upper section of a wall, usually triangular, at either end of a ridged roof.

Ground Heave:	Swelling of clay sub-soil due to absorption of moisture, can cause an upward movement in foundations.
Gully:	An opening into a drain, normally at ground level, placed to receive water from downpipes and waste pipes.
Haunching:	See 'Benching'. Also, a term used to describe the support to a drain underground.
Hip:	The external junction between two intersecting roof slopes.
Hood mould:	Decorative sculpted form over windows and doors designed to deflect rainwater running down the wall from the windows or doors' timber frames.
House Longhorn Beetle:	A serious insect pest mainly confined to the extreme southeast of England, which can destroy the structural strength of timber.
Inspection Chamber:	Sometimes referred to as a 'man-hole', an access point to a drain comprising a chamber (of brick, concrete or plastic) with the drainage channel at its base and a removable cover at ground level.
Jamb:	Side part of a doorway or window.
Joist:	Horizontal structural timber used in a flat roof, ceiling and floor construction. Occasionally also metal/web.
Landslip:	Downhill movement of unstable earth, clay, rock etc. often following prolonged heavy rain or coastal erosion, but sometimes due entirely to sub-soil having little cohesive integrity.
Lath:	Thin strip of wood used as a backing to plaster.
Lath and plaster:	Traditional method of creating walls and ceilings. Laths, often riven oak, are nailed to the studs/joists, and then the plaster is pushed between the laths creating a supporting 'nib' (sometimes referred to as 'snots').
Lintel:	Horizontal structural beam of timber, stone, steel or concrete placed over window or door openings.
LPG:	Liquid Petroleum Gas or Propane. Available to serve gas appliances in areas without mains gas.
Mortar:	A mixture of aggregate/sand, cement/lime and water, used to bed and joint stones or bricks.
Mullion:	Vertical bar dividing individual lights in a window.
Newel:	Stout post supporting a staircase handrail at the top and bottom. Also, the central pillar of a winding or spiral staircase.
Oversite:	Rough concrete below timber ground floors: the level of the oversite should be above external ground level, and ideally at least 300 mm below the bottom of the floor joists.
Parapet:	Low wall along the edge of a flat roof, balcony etc.
Pier:	A vertical column of brickwork or other material, used to strengthen a wall or to support a weight.
Plasterboard:	A rigid sandwich of plaster between coarse paper. Now in widespread use for ceilings and walls. Usually skimmed over with plaster.
Pointing:	Smooth outer edge of the mortar joint between bricks, stones etc.

Powder Post Beetle:	A relatively uncommon pest which can, if untreated, cause widespread damage to structural timbers.
Purlin:	Horizontal beam in a roof upon which rafters rest.
Quoin:	The external angle of a building; or, specifically, bricks or stone blocks forming that angle.
Rafter:	A sloping roof beam, usually timber, forming the structure of a roof.
Random Rubble:	Primitive method of stone wall construction with no attempt at bonding or coursing.
Rendering:	Covering of a wall with either plaster (internally) or lime/cement (externally), sometimes with pebble-dash, stucco or Tyrolean textured finish.
Reveals:	The side faces of a window or door opening.
Ridge:	The apex of a roof, usually a board or a beam.
Riser:	The vertical part of a step or stair.
Roof Spread:	Outward bowing of a wall caused by the thrust of a badly restrained roof structure (see 'Collar').
Screed:	Final, smooth finish of a solid floor; usually cement, concrete or asphalt.
Septic Tank:	Drainage installation whereby sewage decomposes through bacteriological activity, which can be slowed down or stopped altogether by the use of chemicals such as bleach, biological washing powders etc. It will likely still need emptying, depending on usage. If the outflow discharges near to a watercourse, the General Binding Rules will apply (see: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/general-binding-rules-small-sewage-discharge-to-the-ground).
Settlement:	General disturbance in a structure showing as distortion in walls etc., possibly a result of major structural failure. Sometimes of little current significance.
Shakes:	Naturally occurring cracks in timber; in building timbers, shakes can appear quite dramatic, but strength is not always impaired.
Shingles:	Small rectangular slabs of wood used on roofs instead of tiles, slates etc.
Soakaway:	Arrangement for disposal of rainwater, utilising graded aggregate laid below ground. These should be at least five meters away from the property and will eventually need to be cleaned out and refilled. More modern examples may use composite cages.
Soaker:	Sheet metal (usually lead, copper or zinc) at the junction of a roof with a vertical surface of a chimney stack, adjoining wall etc. associated with flashings which should overlay soakers.
Soffit:	The under-surface of eaves, balcony, arch etc.
Solid Fuel:	Heating fuel, normally coal, coke, wood or one of a variety of proprietary fuels. Any wood used must be seasoned.
Spandrel:	Space above and to the sides of an arch; also, the space below a staircase.

Stud Partition:	Lightweight, sometimes non-loadbearing wall construction comprising a framework of timber/metal faced with plaster, plasterboard or other finish.
Subsidence:	Ground movement, generally downward, possibly a result of mining activities, erosion or clay shrinkage.
Sub-Soil:	Soil lying immediately below the topsoil, upon which foundations usually bear.
Sulphate Attack:	A chemical reaction, activated by water, between tricalcium aluminate and soluble sulphates. Can cause deterioration in stone/brick walls and concrete floors.
Tie Bar:	A metal bar passing through a wall, or walls, to brace a structure suffering from structural instability.
Torching:	Mortar applied on the underside of roof tiles or slates to help prevent moisture penetration and wind uplift. Not usually seen after the 1940's.
Transom:	The horizontal bar of wood or stone across a window or top of a door.
Tread:	The horizontal part of a step or stair.
Trussed Rafters:	A method of roof construction utilising a prefabricated triangular framework of timbers. Now widely used in domestic construction.
Underpinning:	A method of strengthening weak foundations whereby a new, stronger foundation is placed beneath the original in sections. This is very disruptive, time-consuming and expensive.
Valley Gutter:	A horizontal or sloping gutter, usually lead or tile-lined, at the internal intersection between two roof slopes.
Ventilation:	Necessary in all buildings to exhaust moisture resulting from bathing, cooking, breathing etc., and to assist in the prevention of condensation. Kitchens, bathrooms and utility rooms – mechanical ventilation is required to exhaust moist air externally. Humidity-controlled systems will work best in most properties. Floor ventilation - necessary to avoid rot, especially dry rot. Achieved by airbricks in the external walls at sub-floor level, floor vents in internal floors and mechanical ducted systems in more complicated situations. Roofspaces - necessary to expel condensation within roof spaces, principally as a result of moisture rising up through the property. Achieved by a dry ventilated ridge system, ventilated ridge tiles, ventilated tiles, ventilation at the eaves, breathable felt or air bricks in the gable ends.
Verge:	The edge of a roof, especially over a gable. This should project at least 50 mm from the wallhead. This can be pointed with mortar (wet) or have mechanically affixed interlocking caps over it (dry).
Verge Board:	Timber, sometimes decorative, placed along the verge of a roof pitch: also known as a 'barge board'.
Wainscot:	Decorative timber paneling on the lower part of an internal wall.

[redacted]

Wall Plate:	Timber placed along the eaves of a roof, to take and spread the weight of the rafters.
Wet Rot:	A general term for the decay of timber due to excessively moist conditions. Leaves timber wet following decay.
Woodworm:	Colloquial term for insect attack, usually intended to mean Common Furniture Beetle, the most frequently encountered insect attack in structural and joinery timber. Emergence holes are usually 1-2mm in diameter and circular. Usually only affects sapwood but may attack heartwood if decay is present.