

JOB REFERENCE: xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

xxxxxxx,
London,
W10 xxxx



FOR

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Prepared by:

XXXXXXXXXXXX

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

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INTRODUCTION

Firstly, may we thank you for your instructions of xxxxxxxx; we have now undertaken a Building Survey (formerly known as a Structural Survey) of the aforementioned property. This Survey was carried out on xxxxxxx.

The Building Survey takes the following format; there is an introductory section (which you are currently reading), which includes a synopsis of the building, and a summary of our findings.

We then go through a detailed examination of the property starting with the external areas working from the top of the property down, followed by the internal areas and the buildings services. We conclude with the section for your Legal Advisor and also attach some general information on the property market.

We are aware that a report of this size is somewhat daunting and almost off-putting to the reader because of this. We would stress that the purchase of a property is usually one of the largest financial outlays made (particularly when you consider the interest you pay as well).

We recommend that you set aside time to read the report in full, consider the comments, make notes of any areas which you wish to discuss further and phone us.

We obviously expect you to read the entire report but we would suggest that you initially look at the summary, which refers to various sections in the report, which we recommend you read first so that you get a general feel for the way the report is written.

As part of our service we are more than happy to talk through the survey as many times as you wish until you are completely happy to make a decision. Ultimately, the decision to purchase the property is yours but we will do our best to offer advice to make the decision as easy as possible.

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REPORT FORMAT

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

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

This has been given in the survey where it is considered it will aid understanding of the issues, or be of interest. This is shown in "italics" for clarity.

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

Throughout the Report, we have endeavoured to define any technical terms used. This is shown in "Courier New" typeface for clarity.

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



We utilise photographs and sketches to illustrate issues or features. In some photographs a pencil, pen or arrow has been used to highlight a specific area. The sketches are not 100% technically accurate; we certainly would not expect you to carry out work based upon the sketches alone.

ORIENTATION

Any reference to left or right is taken from the front of the property, including observations to the rear, which you may not be able to physically see from the front of the property.

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

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SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

The property is situated on a corner plot and is two storeys in height, one of which is below ground level, and therefore appears as a single storey when viewed externally.

There are outside areas in the form of a front and rear light well/patio below ground level. The property also has a small front garden with driveway to the left hand side giving off road parking. To the rear there is also a small garden.

We were advised that the property was built in 2006 by an architect and that he lived in the property for some time. If the age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

Putting Life into Perspective!

Some of the things that were happening around the time the property was built:

2000	Broadband
2002	The Queen Mother died
2005	7/7 London Bombings
2006	Queen Elizabeth II turned 80 and celebrated at Windsor
2008	Lewis Hamilton became the youngest Formula One World Champion
2011	Prince William married Catherine Middleton at Westminster Abbey
2012	The Summer Olympics is held in London!

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EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front View



Right hand/ rear View



Front elevation left view



Front elevation right view



Front garden



Front parking area



Rear garden

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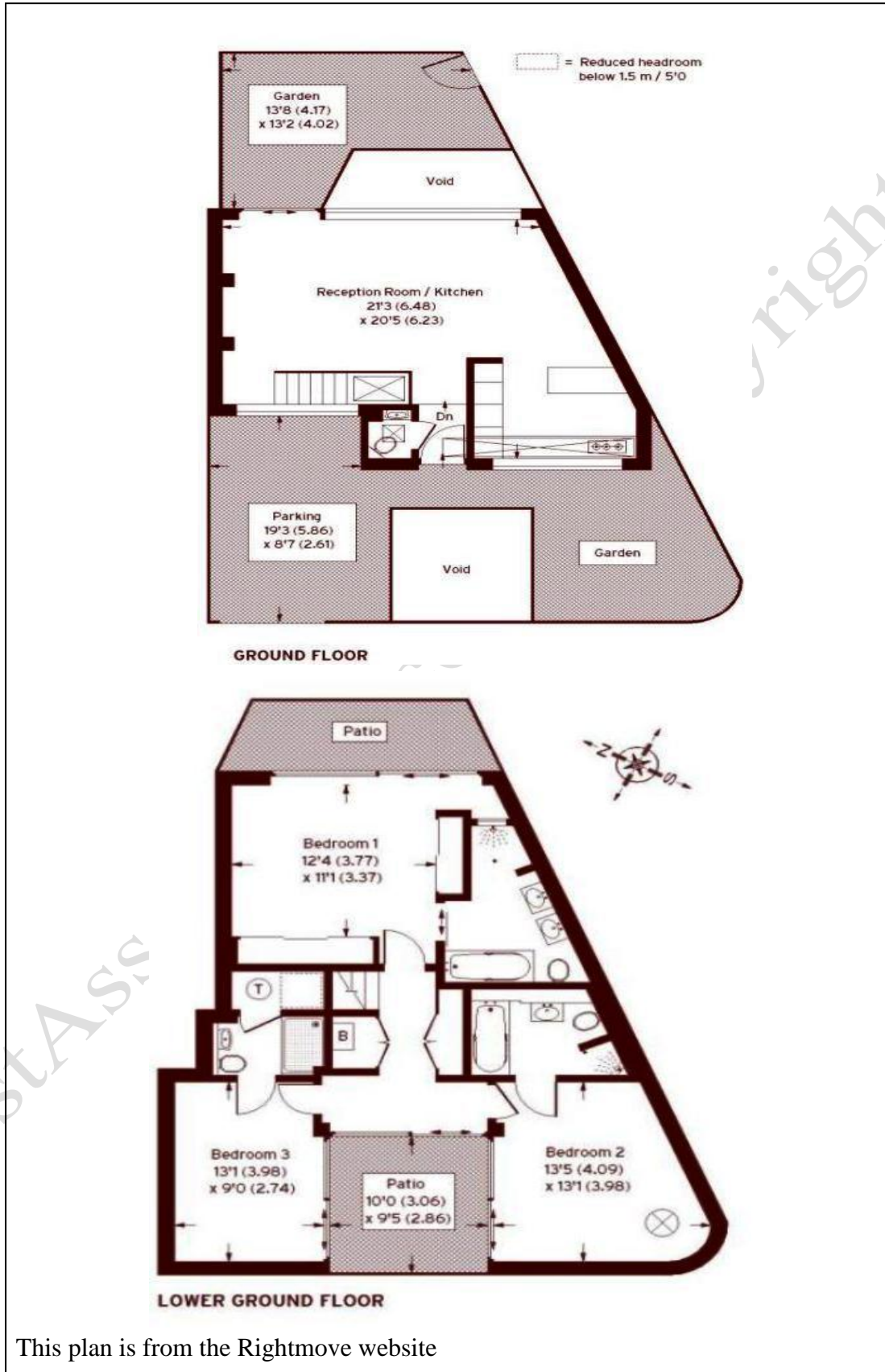
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Floor Plan



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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

(All directions given as you face the front of the property)

Upper Ground Floor

The upper ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Open plan Lounge /Dining / Kitchen area
- 2) Cloakroom

Lower Ground Floor

The lower ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Hallway
- 2) Master Bedroom (rear)
- 3) En-suite Bathroom to Master Bedroom (rear)
- 4) Bedroom two (front left)
- 5) En-suite Shower Room to Bedroom Two (left)
- 6) Bedroom Three (front right)
- 7) En-suite Bathroom to Bedroom Three (right)
- 8) Utility cupboard /area

The bedrooms include built in wardrobes and access to outside areas.

Outside Areas

The property has light wells/patios to the front and to the rear. There is a front and rear garden at upper ground floor level with off road parking to the front left hand side.

Finally, all these details need to be checked and confirmed by your Legal Advisor.

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INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

The following photos are of the internal of the property to help you recall what it looked like and the general ambience (or lack of). We have not necessarily taken photographs of each and every room.

Upper ground Floor



Stair case from lower ground floor to lounge



Lounge area



Dining area



Kitchen area



Kitchen area



Cloakroom



Cloakroom

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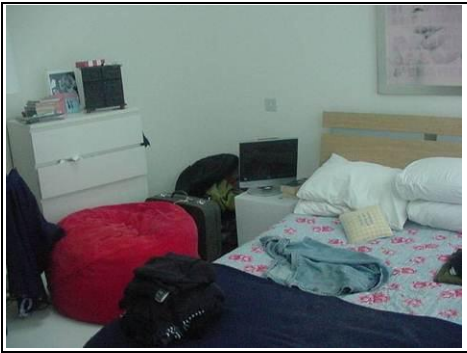
Lower Ground Floor



Bedroom two (front left)



En-suite shower room
(to bedroom two)



Bedroom three (front right)



En-suite bathroom
(to bedroom three)



Utility cupboard/area



Hallway leading to master
bedroom



Master bedroom (rear)



En-suite bathroom
(to master bedroom)

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SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Main Roof:	Mono-ply roof with roof windows
Lower ground floor roof:	Warm roof with beach washed pebble coverage and roof windows
Roof Structure:	Not seen assumed concrete, possibly timber to upper ground floor.
Gutters and Downpipes:	Metal and Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic
Walls:	Painted Render (assumed)
Windows and Doors:	Aluminium double glazed windows with trickle vents

Internal

Ceilings:	Plasterboard/proprietary board/concrete (assumed)
Walls:	Solid (assumed)
Floors: Lower Ground	Concrete (assumed)
Upper Ground:	Concrete (assumed)

Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, electricity and gas (all assumed). We are advised that the main drains are pumped. There is a wall mounted Keston boiler in the utility cupboard/area and a Megaflow under the stairs.

The above terms are explained in full in the main body of the Report.
We have used the term 'assumed' as we have not opened up the structure.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

We have divided the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues.

Once you have read the report we would recommend that you revisit the property to review your thoughts on the building in light of the comments we have made in this survey.

The Good

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

- 1.0) The design, we assume you like this style of modern architecture?
- 2.0) There is a good use of space within the property.
- 3.0) The property has off road parking.
- 4.0) The property has potential possibly for a vertical extension. The present owner advised that he had outline discussions with the planner with regard to this matter. You may wish to look into this further.

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

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The Bad

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

1.0) Black Mono-ply roof main roof

Our experience of black mono-ply roofs is that they tend to absorb the heat considerably and in our experience do not weather well. We have come across a few cases now where blistering occurs.



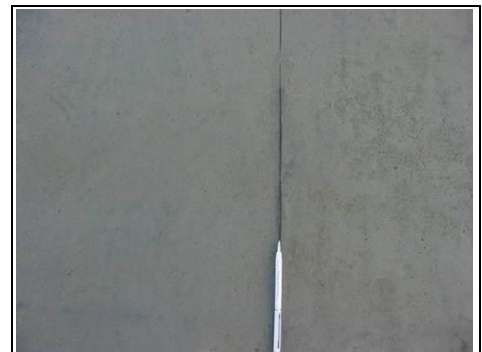
Black mono-ply roof

Black mono-ply detailing

We would add that some of the detailing, we feel, is poor, for example, the up-stand does not seem to be bedded properly. We could also see lines visible on the mono-ply where it joins, possibly something has been sitting on the roof.



Checking the detailing



Lines on mono-ply roof

ACTION REQUIRED: We are unhappy to recommend this type of roof. Whilst there were no visible signs internally of it leaking we do feel it's only a matter of time.

ANTICIPATED COST: To replace the roof will be £5,000 - £10,000 (five thousand to ten thousand pounds) dependent upon how you replace it. An alternative may be to put shingle over the top of it to protect it from the sun and the frost. However we do not know how strong the roof structure is; please obtain quotations.

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Rear light well

We also noted that mono-ply had been used for the rear light well. Again we would much prefer to see more traditional materials used such as lead



Mono-ply used on rear light well



Flashing on the roof where it meets the building next door. We would prefer this to be lead.

2.0) Roof drainage

We feel the roof will be heavy maintenance as it has an awkward design that does not flow.

For example, where the windows are above the kitchen, there is a very small box gutter which, from what we can see, will become blocked.

We also removed tin cans from the hopper head and we were not keen on the detail and would prefer to see larger hopper heads.



Roof windows above the kitchen with small box gutter



Close up of small box gutter



Cans and leaves in hopper head

Please see the roof Section of this Report.

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3.0) Roof windows/roof lights

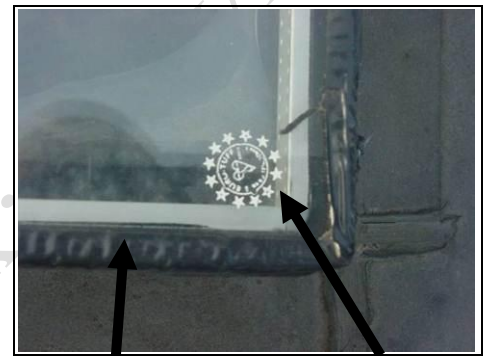
We think that some of the roof windows will leak. In our opinion they are poorly detailed as the edges of the windows have a tape around them rather than a proper frame. We do appreciate that the water does have to run off the glass but we feel this tape may come away over the years and allow dampness in and in turn break the double glazed seal.



Detail to the roof window

ACTION REQUIRED: We believe you need specialist advice with regard to the roof lights. We would personally prefer a domed roof light. Please see our article on roof lights in the appendices.

ANTICIPATED COST: We would expect costs in the region of £250-£500 (two hundred and fifty to five hundred pounds) for a domed roof window; please obtain quotations.



Tape around the edge of the glass instead of a frame.

Kite mark visible on glass

Other roof windows



Roof window into the front bedroom below



Roof window to the front



This window has a trim- why do the main roof windows not have a trim like this?

Please see the Roof Window Section of this Report.

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4.0) Light wells/patios

The light wells/patios to the front and rear below ground level are in danger, we feel, of allowing dampness through. We could see some blistering and we were getting higher readings to the walls then we would like. This does indicate that dampness could come through.



Front light well/patio - top



We would prefer to see weep holes for the water to come through rather than fighting against it.



Front light well/patio-bottom



Bottom of the rear light well where we were getting high readings



Testing with the damp meter – reading of 69

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Blistering to rear light well
right hand side



Rusting on the corner bead.

ACTION REQUIRED: This is very difficult to resolve. To some extent you may just end up painting it every year or so to keep it looking good. You could add weep holes, which to some extent would direct the rain water; this is difficult to do properly as an afterthought. The complete solution would be to take down the wall and rebuild it; however this would depend on how bad it gets. You may have to live with it not looking that great and then make a decision on what to do.

5.0) Rusting

Whilst we have already mentioned the rusting we just want to draw your attention to it. We were surprised to see, that in a property that has only been refurbished in March of this year some four or five months ago, rusting visible on some of the metal work. This metal work is to the rear light well and does indicate to us that there may be a problem with dampness in this area.

There was also some rusting around the rear light well at the base of the glass.

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Rusting to corner beads



Rust to the base of the rear light well

6.0) Front wall

We can see that the wall design has been thought through i.e. having a soil bed at high level. It also has weep holes to allow the water to drain out but unfortunately efflorescence is visible and also staining around the weep hole. This will be an on-going maintenance issue.



Front wall has problems with water coming out of it



Weep hole



Weep holes that have not been cleaned up

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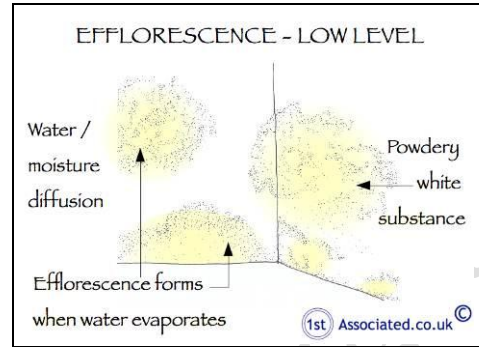
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Efflorescence on wall



Efflorescence

7.0) Constant and on-going maintenance

We were advised by the owner that this property was completely re-furbished in March 2012. We can already see some defects coming through. We feel there are a fair amount of alterations and amendments that need to be made to this property to make it work. There is also a lot of white painting to be done to keep it in a pristine condition. We would say that you are looking at this property in its best condition (we would almost use the term ‘painted to sell’) in sunny summer London weather! It will look far worse in a year or so in the middle of the winter.



Property will require a lot of maintenance

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to have a budget to allow regular maintenance of this property. This will be for both on-going maintenance such as clearing the roof and also planned maintenance in the form of re-decorating.

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8.0) Pump Drainage

The property has a pump drainage system. You need to be aware that this can be noisy as it sits outside the rear master bedroom.

There is also some noise from the ceiling mounted extract fan system in the bathroom and shower rooms.



Waste water pump control box

9.0) Solar gain in summer and heat loss in winter

Whilst we are sure that the architect considered this there is a lot of glass in the property. We spoke to the current owner who advised that the double glazing is argon filled and some of it is tinted. In our experience original designs often need tweaking to ensure they are correct. Whilst speaking to the current owner about this he advised he had not carried out any work.

10.0) Privacy- Buses going past, can they see into the garden?

We noticed a lot of buses whilst we there, in fact a surprising number of buses. This may or may not bother you. We wondered if privacy would be an issue.



Buses pass the property often



Can people on the bus see into the garden?

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11.0) Design features that you may or may not like

Flush render

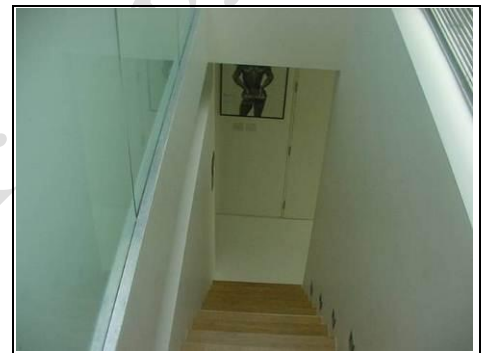
The flush render on the exterior of the property is not the best way to render a property although we appreciate it is part of the modernist style.



No drip detail above the window

No hand rail

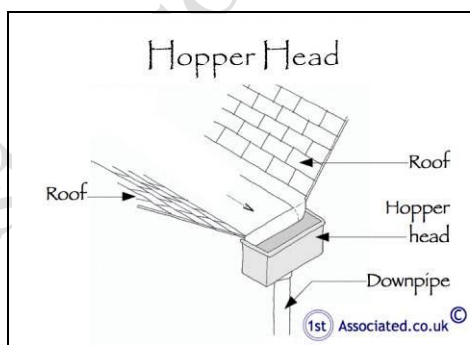
There is no handrail and although this may look good design wise the practicality of not having a handrail on wooden stairs may not be as good?



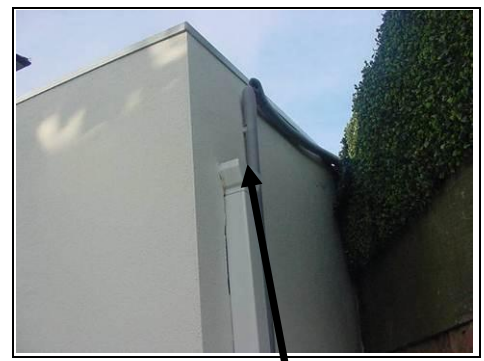
No hand rail on stairs

Small hopper head

Whilst we have spoken about the small box gutter that goes with this we feel that with the amount of rain we get, this could over flow and we would look to replace it with a larger hopper head.



Sketch shows normal size of hopper head in relation to downpipe.



Small hopper head front right hand corner

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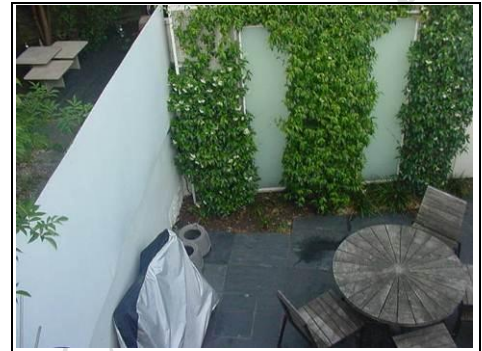
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The boundary between the property and the neighbour to the rear left hand side.

We believe that there will be noise transfer from the neighbour to the rear left hand side as there is only a thin board between you. This could be relatively easily sorted out.



Boundary/partition between you and your rear left hand



Boundary between you and your rear left hand neighbour

Ledge to the rear light well

There really should not be ledges on a white property such as this where water can sit.



Ledge on white wall

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The Ugly

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

We have found more than the average number of things that we would classify as bad. We would specifically comment upon the roof and the water penetration together with the high maintenance. There are enough other things within the bad section to make this a high risk purchase and we would recommend either not purchasing the property or thinking very carefully about it due to the costs associated with it.

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Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Maintenance

Whilst this is a modern property, from what we have seen, we believe it to be high maintenance. Please see our earlier comments. A budget for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in a good condition. This will prevent undue and unnecessary deterioration.

Services

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection only of the services within the property and we would always recommend you have your own specific testing for each of the services.

Electrics

The Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE) recommend a test and report whenever a property changes occupancy. This should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

Heating

We did not experience the heating on the day of our survey. However it was warm in the property and we were taking higher than average temperature readings to the walls particular at high level (internally). We would recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract is placed with an approved heating engineer.

Drainage

Please note our comments about this being a pumped drainage system. We could hear noise when we tested the W.C.s and the water etc. in the rear master bedroom which is near to where the pump is located. You should experience this for yourself.

ACTION REQUIRED - SERVICES: We would reiterate that we recommend with regard to all services that you have an independent check by a specialist contractor.

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DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as clearing the roofs and ensuring the gutters etc. are clean. We have detailed these and other issues within the main body of the report.

Purchase Price

We have not been asked to comment upon the purchase price in this instance, we have however referred you to sources of general information on the housing market within the Information on the Property Market Section, which can be found in the Appendices at the end of the Report.

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

Every business transaction has a risk, only you can assess whether that risk is acceptable to you and your circumstances. You should now read the main body of the Report paying particular attention to any “**ACTION REQUIRED**” points.

Estimates of Building Costs

Where we have offered an estimate of building costs please remember we are not experts in this area. We always recommend you obtain quotations for the large jobs before purchasing the property (preferably three quotes). The cost of building work has many variables such as the cost of labour and estimates can of course vary from area to area when giving a general indication of costs. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £125 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

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

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SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



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

We feel you should think very carefully upon this purchase. From our brief discussions we are aware you are an architect and no doubt will understand the implications of these various design issues. We feel that whilst the overall look of the building is great, it has been let down with the detailing.

We would refer you to our comments in the Executive Summary, 'Good', 'Bad' and 'Ugly' Section and ask that you re-read these.

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

We would ask that you read the Report in full and contact us on any issues that you require further clarification on.

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MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

Just a few more comments about the Report format before you read the actual main body of the Report.

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

We have assumed that the property is to be sold Freehold or Long leasehold, with no unusual or onerous clauses and that vacant possession will be available on completion. Your Legal Advisor should confirm that this is the case.

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

It is important to remember that the estate agents are acting for the seller (usually known as the vendor) and not the purchaser and are therefore eager to sell the property (no sale – no fee!). We as your employed Independent Chartered Surveyor represent your interests only.

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

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

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

This report is being carried out under our terms of engagement for Building Surveys, as agreed to and signed by yourselves. If you have not seen or are not happy with the terms of engagement please phone immediately 0800 298 5424 or email the secretary from which this survey came from.

OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

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

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