



Director  
M O'Hara BSc MRICS

**OSBORNE** ◆ **IRISH**  
A S S O C I A T E S  
CHARTERED SURVEYORS



**FULL BUILDING SURVEY**

**IN RESPECT OF**

**Lynbrook House  
Stocks Lane  
Bristol  
BS14 7DG**

**\*\*\***

**CLIENT**

**Mr & Mrs O'Hara  
Whiteladies House  
Clifton  
Bristol  
BS8 2NT  
\*\*\***

**DATE OF INSPECTION**

**10 October 2016**

**\*\*\***

**WEATHER**

**Overcast with occasional sunny outbreaks - 8°C**

**\*\*\***

**MOH/njc/15.0360**

**\*\*\***

**PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

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Stocks Lane  
Bristol  
BS14 7DG**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Our instructions which were confirmed 07 October 2016 were to carry out an inspection of the above property and submit a report on the general condition and state of repair. For the purposes of this report, we have not carried out any tests to services and our comments under this section of the report are restricted to a superficial and visual inspection only.

Our conditions of engagement are set out at the end of this report. All directions given within this report are made as viewed from Main Road and facing the subject property.

**LIMITATIONS TO INSPECTION**

Our inspection of the property was carried out from our vantage point at ground level from within the boundaries of the site and from the adjacent public highway/rights of way. In this instance, fitted carpets, floor coverings and general household items within the property prevented a detailed inspection of some internal areas.

A number of roof timbers and underlining materials were not accessible, particularly bearing in mind accommodation incorporated in the top floor area. We also had no access to underlining or areas below roof slopes in the Court Room or Games Room and these unseen parts cannot be commented upon.

**TENURE**

The tenure details are not known and should be investigated by your legal advisers. For the purposes of this report we have assumed the tenure to be freehold or long leasehold at a nominal annual ground rent with no unusual or onerous covenants.

For the purposes of this report we assume that vacant possession will be given upon completion.

## SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

(Some buildings may not comply with the requirements for today's new buildings, and could include harmful or hazardous materials. This report will include details of such materials where their use is apparent from the visual inspection but with certain types of building it may be impossible to confirm the details of construction).

The property is a detached two/three storey building originally constructed circa 1857. It has been subject to some alteration and extension in more recent times to the left of the original building where changes and improvements have been made to what is likely to have been a coach house or similar. We are unsure as to the date of these changes and further information in this respect may possibly be obtained by your legal advisers at the time of local searches/precontract enquiries.

We have been informed by the estate agents details that the property is the subject of a Grade II listing.

## ACCOMMODATION

Ground floor:	main entrance hall, sitting room, lounge, kitchen/breakfast room, dining room, wine cellar, side/rear hallway with WC and access to study.
First floor:	landing, three bedrooms, two large bathrooms/WC.
Top floor:	two bedrooms, shower/WC.
Externally:	large grounds comprising formal gardens adjacent, rear strip field. Triple garage, dilapidated outbuilding, boiler store.

## **GENERAL CONDITION AND STATE OF REPAIR**

We have not inspected parts of the property which are covered, unexposed or otherwise inaccessible and cannot confirm them to be free from defects etc.

### **EXTERNALLY**

The exterior of this property was inspected from ground floor level only unless stated below and foundations have not been exposed for examination. Our inspection was however assisted by the use of binoculars.

#### **Chimney Stacks**

(Including associated flashings, etc.)

There are some seven chimney stacks serving the building which were viewed from our vantage point at ground level using binoculars although a closer inspection of some elevations was possible from the main roof area. There are two stacks on the left, three on the right together with two central stacks. All of the structures are of traditional stone construction with lead flashings and soakers at the joint with adjacent roof slopes.

#### **View of right hand chimney stack**



### Left hand rear stack



At the time of the survey we did note evidence of slight inward lean, particularly in terms of the rear left hand stack although elevations of other structures appeared to be satisfactory. Distortion on the inwardly leaning stack, which is located on the large left hand gable of the original structure, was considered to be within acceptable limits.

Stonework itself was in reasonable condition for a building of this age and type although there are, inevitably, a number of open joints to sections of the stonework which can be seen in adjacent photographs. This is certainly not unexpected or particularly excessive although is likely to deteriorate further with age without repairs. Raking out and repointing should be considered as part of refurbishment works.

Flashings and soakers showed evidence of slight lifting and refixing of lead work is now required to prevent water penetration internally.

Any open chimney pots which are to be unused should be capped with half round ventilating cowls or similar inserts to prevent bird, water or debris entry.

**Open pointing on rear left hand stack**



**Lifted joinery on rear chimney stack**



Boiler flues are located on the rear of the original structure and appeared to be suitably positioned. Functional tests should be arranged on the boilers through a GAS SAFE heating engineer in the absence of any recent test certificates.

**Action: Ensure continued maintenance of chimney stacks, particularly in relation to repointing and also refixing of flashings/soakers where appropriate.**

### **Boiler flues on rear elevation**



### **Roofs**

The outer surfaces of the roofs are inspected from ground floor level only. Roof slopes or flat areas which cannot be seen have been specifically excluded although attention has been drawn to their presence.

The roof is of a multi gable pitched design with “turret” sections on the left of the main structure and, indeed, the front right hand corner. The roof itself was accessed via one of the windows in the upper accommodation which can be seen in adjacent photographs. Gable sections have been formed on the left and right of the main structure together with a prominent gable at the front above the central entrance door. Ridges run parallel to the front/rear of the property and, indeed, parallel to the left/right hand flank walls. Coverings comprise natural and manmade slate with concrete style ridge sections. Lead hip dressings have been incorporated on hip sections which can be seen on the front left hand corner of the main roof and, indeed, the front right hand turret area.

**View of central valley roof slopes**



**Further view of roofs**



During the survey we found no indication of sag or deflection to the roof slopes suggesting that the supporting timbers are of a suitable size to carry the imposed load upon them. The ridge sections showed evidence of minor undulation although this is certainly not excessive with distortions considered to be within acceptable limits.

Inspection from ground level and, indeed, in the inner valley areas revealed a number of slipped and damaged slates and it is clear that replacement sections are now required. Others have been refixed with lead tingles suggesting that slipping has been a problem in the past. Whilst complete recovering is not necessary, there will certainly be a fair amount of refixing in relation to slates and also replacement of any damaged sections. We also noted deterioration to ridge bedding which will potentially allow water penetration and lifting and rebedding of ridge tiles is recommended.

#### **Slipped and damaged slates noted on right hand roof slope**



There is a central valley area on the main roof which leads to a secondary valley taking water to the right hand side of the building. Coverings comprise lead work which is typical of a building of this age and design. The main central valley was in satisfactory condition and no obvious leaking was noted below. The secondary valley did show evidence of some sludge build up and this clearly requires clearing out. This may have occurred due to a fairly shallow gradient and it will not be easy to redesign should you wish to do so. This will naturally require the regular inspection of valleys and cleaning out of debris to allow water to channel to ground level appropriately. There are also a number of sloping valleys at the intersection of roof slopes, again, lined with lead work. Sloping and horizontal valleys are notoriously prone to blockage and deterioration and can be a frequent source of water penetration internally. Whilst we found no indication of leaking, regular checks on lining materials will be required with any blockage removed as soon as possible.

#### **Sludge and plant build up in secondary valley**



Dormer sections have been incorporated on the inner roof slopes. Rot was noted to many areas and cutting out and replacement of defective timbers is a requirement. Lead covered roofs are present on the dormers which showed no indication of leaking at the time of our survey.

#### **Rot noted to dormers**



Lead hip dressings were in reasonable condition and it is clear that some sections have been subject to replacement since original construction.

Parapets have been formed where main walls have been taken up above the line of roof level which can be seen on the rear courtroom part of the structure and, indeed, areas above the upper accommodation. The latter sections have been dressed with lead, presumably due to previously eroded coping stones. Lead work forming flashings with the rear parapet is particularly poor and requires replacement. This can be seen in adjacent photographs.

**Plant growth suggests open joints on stonework/copings of front gable**



**Poor flashings on rear left hand gable**



Parapets on the front gable section showed evidence of open jointing which is allowing plant growth. Repointing of any open sections should be considered.

The left hand turret has a flat lead roof on timber framework. There was no indication of obvious deterioration noted externally and certainly no obvious sign of damp penetration below.

#### **Flat lead roof over left hand turret roof**



The right hand turret is part hip pitched leading to a larger lead covering. A number of slipped slates are present which should be refixed in conjunction with overhauling the main roof. Lead hip dressings are also dated and split in part and we suggest these be renewed.

There are many “velux style” windows providing light to the upper accommodation. These appeared to be operating effectively where tests were possible although we do point out that it is important that they be regularly inspected. Joints between the windows and slates are notoriously prone to leaking as are similar areas at the joint between dormers and slates. Regular checking must be undertaken to ensure that problems do not develop. We did note that a window on the left hand inner roof slope has been subject to flash band repair in the past which can only be described as a temporary material and ongoing maintenance is likely to be required in this respect.

**View of right hand “turret”**



**View of right hand “turret” roof – some poor lead dressing noted**



The rear roof slope above the courtroom has been finished with manmade slate which may well contain elements of cement asbestos. This material is unlikely to have any significant health implication provided that it remains in an undamaged condition although it is likely to have a more limited life expectancy in relation to natural slates.

The gable pitched roof above the two storey side extension has been finished with slates which were found to be in satisfactory condition. There was no indication of sag or deflection noted to this particular roof covering suggesting that the supporting timbers are of a suitable size to carry the imposed load upon them.

**Action: Instruct a suitably competent roofing contractor (preferably one experienced with older buildings) to carry out an inspection of the roof and provide estimates for general overhaul. This may be potentially expensive and we recommend that this be undertaken prior to exchange of contracts.**

### **Rainwater Equipment**

Unless it was raining at the time of inspection it might not be possible to state whether or not the rainwater fittings are watertight or properly aligned.

The main roofs drain to valley and sloping valley sections which have previously been discussed. We reiterate that these areas are prone to blockage and deterioration and can be a frequent source of water penetration internally which can cause deterioration to timbers and other materials. Regular checks on linings will be required with any blockage removed as soon as possible.

Other rainwater goods comprise PVC and metal gutters leading to metal downpipes. It is clear that a number of the rainwater goods are in poor condition and overhaul is now recommended.

Corrosion was noted on the right hand downpipe which can be seen in adjacent photographs and this is clearly in poor condition and requires replacement. This downpipe now also appears to be partly blocked in the upper parts which is allowing overflow and subsequent staining of stonework. Other surface corrosion and splitting is present to the downpipes which is allowing a degree of leaking at joints which can certainly be seen on the front and left hand side of the building. Rubbing down, treatment with rust inhibiting primer and redecoration of these areas will be required.

**Poor downpipes require repair**



**Replace poor downpipe on right of building**



There was a leaking gutter over the left hand lower entrance area and sealing at joints is recommended.

The rear PVC downpipe is partly missing and refixing is required. This should be channelled to a gulley to take water away from walkways. We did note that the gulley which previously served this appeared to be blocked and this should be cleared out.

#### **Missing downpipe on rear**



The downpipe adjacent to the back door from the kitchen appears to stop in mid air. Ideally, a more suitable arrangement should be considered at this point.

Some uneven gutters are also present with examples including the rear right hand areas and, indeed, parts of the extension. Where uneven parts are present, taking down and realignment would be prudent.

**Action: Instruct a suitably competent contractor to provide estimates for overhaul of rainwater goods as necessary.**

**Leaking/overflow downpipe causing staining of stonework**



**Uneven gutter on rear of extension**



## **Main Walls**

The foundations, cavity wall ties or other concealed structural elements have not been exposed for examination and therefore not all defects can be fully diagnosed. The adequacy of sub-floor ventilation is assessed only from the visible exterior surfaces)

Main walls are of solid construction comprising random pennant stonework and attractive decorative freestone. Areas of detailed stonework were also present, particularly on the front of the building which were pleasing features.

Freestone dressings have, inevitably, been subject to a degree of erosion in the past with perhaps the most obvious being transoms serving the windows. Examples of deteriorating stonework can be seen on the left of the main building together with the front. These clearly require reforming. Areas of glass were noted below front transoms although we are unsure as to their purpose. Minor damaged sections are present which you may wish to repair.

### **Eroded freestone requires repair**

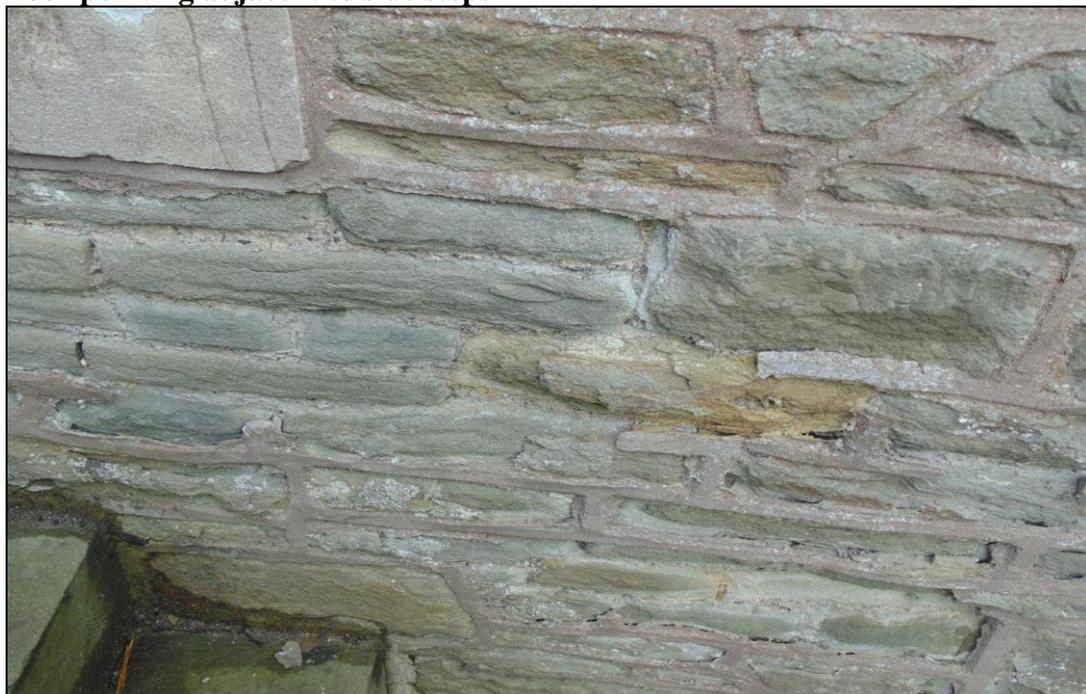


### **Damaged glass sections below transoms on front windows**



There are areas of deterioration to the mortar pointing between many parts of the stonework where raking out and patch pointing is now a requirement. Examples can certainly be seen adjacent to the left hand entrance steps, parts of the smaller left hand gable together with parts of the larger left hand gable. There is also deterioration to pointing on the right and front together with slight delamination of random pennant stonework and this highlights the importance of regular maintenance in relation to exterior parts.

### **Poor pointing adjacent to side steps**



The extension comprises stonework together with blockwork which may contain elements of cavity design. There is a slight disparity between the original part of the building and more modern stonework which has been used. Some deterioration is present to pointing and also minor erosion/damage to corner quoin work where repairs should be undertaken.

**Modern/old stonework on rear of extension**



**Some repointing required on extension**



### Repairs to quoin work of extension recommended



Small areas of render finish are present on the right hand gable. Through binoculars we were able to identify minor hairline cracks where water may potentially penetrate. Filing of cracks should be undertaken. At the time of this work, should any hollow render be identified then this may require hacking off and replacement.

Where the lintels over openings are concealed we are not able to comment on their construction or condition. In older buildings of this type, timber lintels are common and these can be prone to rot or wood boring beetle infestation without signs being immediately apparent on the surface. We did note some timber infestation in the lintel over the kitchen doorway although this did not appear to be recent with no sign of activity present during the survey.

**Action: Obtain estimates for repair of external stonework in terms of reforming areas of eroded freestone together with repointing as necessary.**

### **Poor pointing on small left hand gable**



### **Structural Movement**

No indication of significant structural movement although some minor settlement is present with examples to be found over right hand external doorways and, indeed, to a number of internal door heads. This is by no means unusual or excessive for a building of this age and type and distortion is within acceptable limits. There was no indication of recent or progressive movement.

We are not aware of any structural repairs or underpinning having been carried out to this building although recommend that this be raised as a specific question by your legal advisors. If it is found that works of this type have been carried out, this should be referred back for additional consideration.

### **Damp Proof Course**

We identified a chemical injection damp proof course to certain parts of the exterior walls, most noticeably adjacent to the kitchen back door. This suggests that specialist treatment has been undertaken in more recent times and you would therefore be prudent to liaise with the owners regarding any guarantees available. Please note that we cannot confirm that damp treatment has been carried out to all parts of the building previously. Should any original damp proof course remain in situ then this will certainly have a limited life expectancy and may breakdown unexpectedly.

### **Evidence of chemical injection damp proofing by kitchen**



One or two of the ground levels are slightly high in relation to internal levels, particularly at the rear of the original structure. This could potentially lead to the bridging of any damp proof course and may encourage dampness internally although there was no obvious defect during the survey. Ideally, a small channel should be cut in between the external ground at the rear which can then be back filled with gravel to create the desired clearance.

### **External Joinery**

Windows serving the property are generally of single glazed metal construction although there are some timber casement units serving the left hand entrance and also part of the kitchen. The extension has timber casement windows and metal roof windows with the latter also present in the top floor loft accommodation.

The metal windows have been subject to a fair amount of corrosion over the years and it is clear that refurbishment will be required although some may well need replacement. You would be prudent to liaise with a competent contractor regarding updating and improvement in this respect.

The timber casement windows serving the kitchen showed evidence of rot and cutting out and replacement of any defective sections would be prudent.

### **Rot noted to kitchen window**



The metal roof windows appeared to be operating effectively at the time of our survey although we reiterate that there are areas of rot around dormer sections which was discussed in earlier parts of the survey. These will also require repair.

The side entrance door is of timber panel design and was operating effectively. There is also a larger left hand door on the upper part of the entrance steps to the left of the property. Rot was noted to the base which should be made good. The timber panel door leading to the boiler room showed evidence of localised rot and defective sections should be cut out and replaced.

The main front entrance doors are of timber panel design and were operating effectively.

Timber part glazed doors are present from the kitchen which have been partly damaged by a family pet and repair will be required. There is a timber stable door from the utility and also timber door from the “jail cells”. Rot was noted which should be overhauled.

**Action: Instruct a suitably competent contractor to provide estimates for overhaul of the external joinery in conjunction with other exterior refurbishment.**

#### **Damage noted to kitchen door**



### **External Decorations**

External decorations are deteriorating, particularly on the window and door joinery which has lead to the development of rot and corrosion. Redecoration will be required in conjunction with repairs discussed in the external joinery part of this survey and you should budget for expenditure in this respect.

## **OUTSIDE**

### **Garage/Outbuildings**

Comment is restricted to important defects, likely to have a material affect on value. Inspection of leisure facilities, etc, is excluded)

There is a garage on the left of the building with two open plan parking areas and a smaller store section which also now incorporates a “gym” behind. The structure appears to be of stone and block construction and may well be part of an original stable block or similar. The garage area appeared to have been reasonably well maintained although some repointing will be required to stonework, as previously mentioned.

The boiler room is reached externally and was adequate although rather basic plasterboard finishes are present throughout which you may wish to improve.

The main entrance steps have a store area below. Dampness is present and we suggest that you do not store valuable or perishable items without taking appropriate measures.

### **The Site**

(Only significant visible defects in boundary fences, walls, retaining walls, paths and drives are reported. Reference to potential hazards such as flooding and tree roots is included where these are readily apparent)

At the time of carrying out searches it is recommended that enquiries are made by your solicitor as to whether the property is affected by potential Mining/Radon/Methane Hazards and on this basis, appropriate tests should be arranged prior to proceeding further. We did not however at the time of our visual inspection note any signs of the property being affected by these defects. The National Radiological Protection Board, Chilton, Didcot, Oxon, can arrange for radon levels to be measured free of charge or contact your local council environmental health officer.

It is important to ascertain as to whether the property is within proximity of a mobile telephone mast. These can be concealed in obscure places to include within chimneys, burglar alarms and drainpipes as well as places such as church spires, petrol station canopies and tree tops. Although current advice is that there is no evidence that these masts threaten health, opposition to them is growing across the UK. Apart from an potential adverse affect upon health there could be an adverse affect upon value.

Reasonable sized grounds, mostly located to the sides of the building and these are enclosed by large stone boundaries. The front boundary is retaining. Boundaries themselves would certainly benefit from general repointing as part of exterior maintenance.

Whilst no significant cracking or deterioration was noted to the front boundary, this was located particularly close to the busy A37 road

and may be subject to vibrations. Occasional maintenance is likely to be required.

There are a number of trees around the site close to both the main building and the boundaries. These should be periodically pruned to prevent damage affecting walls of the property and the boundaries themselves.

There is a water feature on the right hand side of the site which was an attractive addition. Rot was noted to timbers holding up the pump section which will require repair. There are also some leaking sections visible from the small rear path area adjacent to the damaged manhole cover and improvements should be considered.

### **Rot to support of water feature pump**



There is a loose handrail on the entrance steps which should be repaired.

Ownership of the various boundaries around the site should be ascertained so that you are aware of your responsibilities in this respect.

You have no doubt made your own assessment of the grounds and may wish to carry out some changes in accordance with your own particular requirements.

### **Drainage**

(Inspection covers within the boundaries have been lifted where visible and possible {except in the cases of flats and maisonettes}. This is to facilitate a visual inspection. The drains have not been tested and it is not possible to comment on hidden areas. Where the drainage systems have not been traced, it is assumed that the drains are connected to the main sewer, or an alternative and acceptable means of disposal)

Due to the limitations of our inspection a drainage test is recommended prior to proceeding further with the purchase of the property.

The property is believed to be connected to the main drainage supply although these details should be clarified by your legal advisors at the time of local searches/pre contract enquiries. They should also raise as a specific question whether any problems have been encountered with the drainage system on this site.

A number of manhole covers were lifted around the site although we were unable to lift all of them. No obvious blockage was noted during the survey.

Soil and ventilation pipes would benefit from vented caps on the upper parts to prevent bird, water and debris entry.

### **Damp around rear manhole – note cover also damaged**



The damaged manhole cover at the rear should be renewed.

**Action:** We recommend a pre-purchase drainage test be undertaken in the normal way preferably prior to exchange of contracts.

**Drainage chamber free from blockage**



## **INTERNALLY**

The interior of the property was inspected from ground floor level only. Furniture, wall hangings, floor coverings, insulation material and stored goods have not been moved.

### **Roof Spaces**

It should be noted that the inspection of the roof space is confined to details of design and basic construction. Individual timbers have not been specifically examined for defects although where defects have been observed as part of the general examination, such defects are noted in this report)

Access was possible to roof spaces although the majority of the main parts have been converted into accommodation. You would be prudent to ensure that the conversion was undertaken with Building Regulation and appropriate consents, particularly bearing in mind its listed status.

### **Small roof void accessible adjacent to sauna stairs**



Access was possible to a roof void adjacent to the steps leading to the sauna together with the right hand turret void. There is also a boarded out void accessible from the upper accommodation.

### View of right hand turret roof



Structural supporting timbers comprise rafters laid upon cross supporting purlins (where visible) together with ridge, valley and hip boards. There are, inevitably, one or two split timbers including rafters although this appears to be superficial rather than structural in nature. Timbers are considered to be appropriate to carry the imposed load upon them.

The underside of the roof slopes have been lined with PVC and bituminous felt in some areas although others remain unlined. The latter arrangement is not unusual given the close fitting nature of slates although water penetration may occur where missing and damaged slates are present.

Ventilation should be provided to the roof spaces to allow air circulation which should help prevent the build up of condensation.

Dampness was noted in the boarded out roof void which can be seen in adjacent photographs. External repairs are required to roofs and chimney stacks as previously mentioned together with repointing of the gable immediately adjacent to the damp itself. Failure to do so will allow further water penetration which could encourage rot in adjacent timbers.

**View of roof space over upper accommodation**



**Evidence of damp in roof void off upper accommodation**



## **Ceilings**

There is always a potential for the use of asbestos sheeting in properties in terms of improvement made over the years. Care should therefore be taken at the time of undertaking any alterations and this includes where there is artex present as this does have an asbestos content and it is dangerous to release fibres from a health point of view.

Ceilings are likely to be of lath and plaster construction together with some replacement plasterboard. A number of attractive exposed timbers have been incorporated in the main reception room and TV/games room. Shrinkage cracking has, inevitably, affected one or two areas although this is certainly not widespread. Filling should be considered as part of routine maintenance.

There is a minor stain in the left hand entrance/snug suggesting previous leaks from sanitary fittings. No obvious ongoing issue was noted although this should be carefully monitored.

It is difficult to assess materials used for rooms such as the courtroom due to the height of the ceiling itself. There is always the potential for cement asbestos sheeting to have been used, particularly given its previous use as a local authority building. This material is unlikely to have any significant health implications provided that it remains in an undamaged condition.

## **Attractive exposed timbers in Court Room**



Arched brickwork was noted in the jail cell rooms which was in satisfactory condition.

With age, the bond between backing laths and plasterwork deteriorates and it is possible that some future shrinkage cracking will be experienced. Shrinkage cracks may also develop at the joints between plasterboards and also at the junction with adjacent walls. Occasional filling of cracks will more than likely be required as part of routine maintenance prior to decoration.

### **Walls and Partitions**

In older type properties there is a potential for plasterwork to break down in terms of the bond between the plaster and wall itself. This particularly applies to lath and plaster construction and at the time of removal of decorations and wallpaper etc. can lead to a requirement for comprehensive replastering.

The internal faces of the main walls are of solid construction with plastered finish. Partitions are of solid construction and also areas of timber studwork.

Walls have been subject to slight settlement in the past judging from distortion over door heads. This is by no means unusual or excessive and we found no indication of recent or progressive movement.

Plasterwork finishes appeared to be fair although upon clearing out the property you may encounter one or two shrinkage cracks. This may well also be the case below wallpaper and occasional filling may be required.

There are one or two areas of dampness internally which will be discussed in later sections. Some hacking off and replacement of damp plaster will be a requirement.

Minor hairline cracks were identified internally, particularly between walls of solid construction where they adjoin areas of timber studwork. Examples of this can be found in the wardrobe of the master bedroom where filling will be required.

### **Chimney Breasts, Fireplaces and Flues**

(It is not possible to include the condition of flues or presence of flue liners. No assumption should be made as to the practicability of using the chimneys. It is recommended that any flues should be swept prior to occupation)

There are many fireplace openings throughout the property which are considered to be attractive features. There is a large working

open fire in the main sitting room. This was not tested during the survey. If you are intending to use it as such we do recommend that the flues be swept and checked prior to use, particularly as in buildings of this age and type they are often decayed unless previously relined.

### **Open fireplace in Sitting Room**



There is a decorative fireplace in the left hand reception room together with wood burning fitting in the rear ante room. Debris was noted in the hearth of the decorative fireplace which should be cleared out. As mentioned previously, any flues which are to be unused should have pots capped and vented.

A number of attractive gas fires are present with examples to be found in the “judges suite” together with the majority of guest bedrooms at first floor level. These were not tested during the survey and if you are intending to retain these items then functional tests should be carried out through a GAS SAFE heating engineer.

There is an open fireplace in the kitchen together with an aga fitting.

A solid fuel burner is present in the entrance room on the side of the building which was an attractive feature.

Other fireplace openings have been blocked and panelled over in the past. Ventilation should be incorporated where not already fitted to allow air circulation which should help prevent the build up of condensation.

**Action: Arrange for functional tests on gas fittings within the property through a GAS SAFE heating engineer in the absence of any recent tests.**

## **Floors**

(Only the surface of floors which are not covered have been inspected but accessible corners or any coverings were lifted where possible to identify the nature of the surface beneath)

Fitted carpets, floor coverings and general household items within the building prevented a detailed inspection of all floor finishes.

Floors throughout the property are of suspended timber in many areas although some solid sections are present at ground floor level. There are a variety of finishes comprising flagstones, tiles, stripped boards and carpets. You have no doubt made your own assessment of the fittings and may wish to alter these depending upon your own particular taste.

One or two damaged boards are present to the suspended timber sections with perhaps the most obvious being in the jail rooms. Whilst these add to the overall character of the property you may wish for individual boards to be replaced in due course. We did identify one or two damp floorboards adjacent to damp walls and examples of this can be found in some of the “jail rooms” and also by the right hand door leading to the small hall and staircase. These will eventually rot and consideration should be given to replacement at the time of any specialist damp and timber treatment.

Some sub floor ventilation has been provided to ground floor level although we suggest this be improved. This is important to prevent the development of rot in lower areas.

## **Dampness**

(A moisture detecting meter has been used in selected accessible positions, without moving furniture, floor coverings, fixtures and fittings, to test for dampness)

Tests were taken with a moisture meter at random points to internal wall, floor and other surfaces. It is inevitable that one or two areas of dampness will be present in a building of this age and type although this did not appear to be widespread in terms of rising dampness at ground floor level. Areas of note include sections of the side entrance/snug together with minor areas adjacent to the jail side door leading to the courtyard area and, indeed, some of the jail walls themselves. Penetrating dampness was identified including left hand front guest suite adjacent to windows and, indeed, around breakfast room windows. We also identified penetrating dampness in the hall floor entrance to the court room adjacent to the left hand steps which can be seen in photographs within this section. There is also some staining to flagstones with examples to be found in the utility room suggesting that there may be an inappropriate damp proof membrane below.

Please note that the above is not considered to be an exhaustive list and it is always possible that other areas may come to light once the property has been cleared out. There is also the potential for penetrating dampness, particularly given defects in relation to external stonework/pointing and deterioration to joinery. This highlights the importance of maintaining exterior parts in good condition at all times.

**Action: Instruct a suitably competent damp treatment specialist to carry out an inspection of the property and provide estimates for repair of any internal dampness.**

Condensation staining is present with examples to be found in the left hand first floor guest suite although other areas may come to light in due course, particularly given the single glazed metal windows in the majority of areas. To help overcome condensation you should endeavour to maintain a suitable balance between background heating, permanent ventilation and insulation.

### **Damp in upper side entrance**



### **Timber Infestation**

We noted evidence of wood boring beetle infestation and it is clear that many timbers have been affected in the past. These include doors, floors and roof timbers. We did note what appeared to be active infestation within the right hand turret roof void and this could potentially “flight” to other timbers in the building. Further investigation is recommended.

We identified evidence of rot to skirtings adjacent to the jail external door due to the proximity of timbers to dampness. There are also damp timbers in the right hand jail room floor and, indeed, adjacent to the right hand hall/door/stairs.

**Action: Obtain estimates for repair in relation to any wood boring beetle infestation, rot or any other timber defects.**

Please note that in a building of this age and type there is always the potential for wet and dry rot to occur or potentially be present in unseen areas. This is particularly so where damp conditions are present. Should this be encountered during any future repairs then specialist inspection should be undertaken.

### **Rot noted to skirtings by “jail” exit door**



### **Internal Joinery**

Internal joinery comprises timber panel and part glazed doors, timber skirting boards and door frames together with the inner faces of windows. A number of the doors have been slight damaged by pets including the first floor lobby entrance and these will require repair. One or two other doors are slightly warped although appeared to close suitably and this adds to the character of the building.

Staircases are of timber and stone construction together with a metal spiral staircase, the latter leading to the sauna. Staircases appeared to be in satisfactory condition.

Kitchen fittings comprise wall and floor mounted units which are adequate for their purpose although you have no doubt made your own assessment and may wish to alter these dependant upon your own particular taste. Please note that functional tests have not been carried out on any of the built in appliances such as the aga.

## **Internal Decorations**

(Furnishings have not been moved to confirm the state of covered or hidden decoration, which may be damaged or faded.)

Internal decoration is satisfactory although clearing out is likely to reveal one or two marks or areas of slight deterioration. You have no doubt made your own assessment of the decoration and may wish to carry out some changes in accordance with your own particular requirements.

## **Other**

There is always a potential for the use of asbestos sheeting in properties in terms of improvement made over the years. Care should therefore be taken at the time of undertaking any alterations and this includes where there is artex present as this does have an asbestos content and it is dangerous to release fibres from a health point of view. Where cement asbestos products are present to walls or ceilings they are unlikely to have any significant health implication provided that they remain in an undamaged condition. However, certain contractors may resist working on such products from a health and safety perspective.

## **Thermal Insulation**

It is recommended that a report is obtained from a specialist company with regard to the thermal efficiency of this property as required. Enquiries should be made at the time of carrying out searches with regard to cavity constructed properties in terms of assessing as to whether cavity wall insulation is present. If this is the case, it should be ensured that there is a suitable guarantee in existence backed by an insurance indemnity or a reputable company such as ICI. Cavity foam has been known to have an adverse affect upon wall ties and furthermore, can over a period of years, disintegrate and turn to powder in certain circumstances causing irritation.

The solid walls and single glazed windows of this property are likely to give a poor standard of thermal insulation to the building.

We did note some wool quilted fibreglass insulation in the roof space although it is difficult to comment on its overall thermal insulation due to the loft accommodation. This highlights the importance of ensuring that the conversion was undertaken with Building Regulation consent to include insulation.

Your attention is drawn to the Energy Performance Certificate in relation to insulation.

## SERVICES

(No tests have been carried out. Only significant defects and deficiencies readily apparent from a visual inspection are reported. Compliance with regulations and adequacy of design, conditions or efficiency can only be assessed as a result of a test and, should you require any further information in this respect, it is essential that you should obtain reports from appropriate specialists before entering into a legal commitment to purchase).

Specialist advice should include information relating to non-return and anti-syphon valves where required by appropriate Regulations.

### **Electricity**

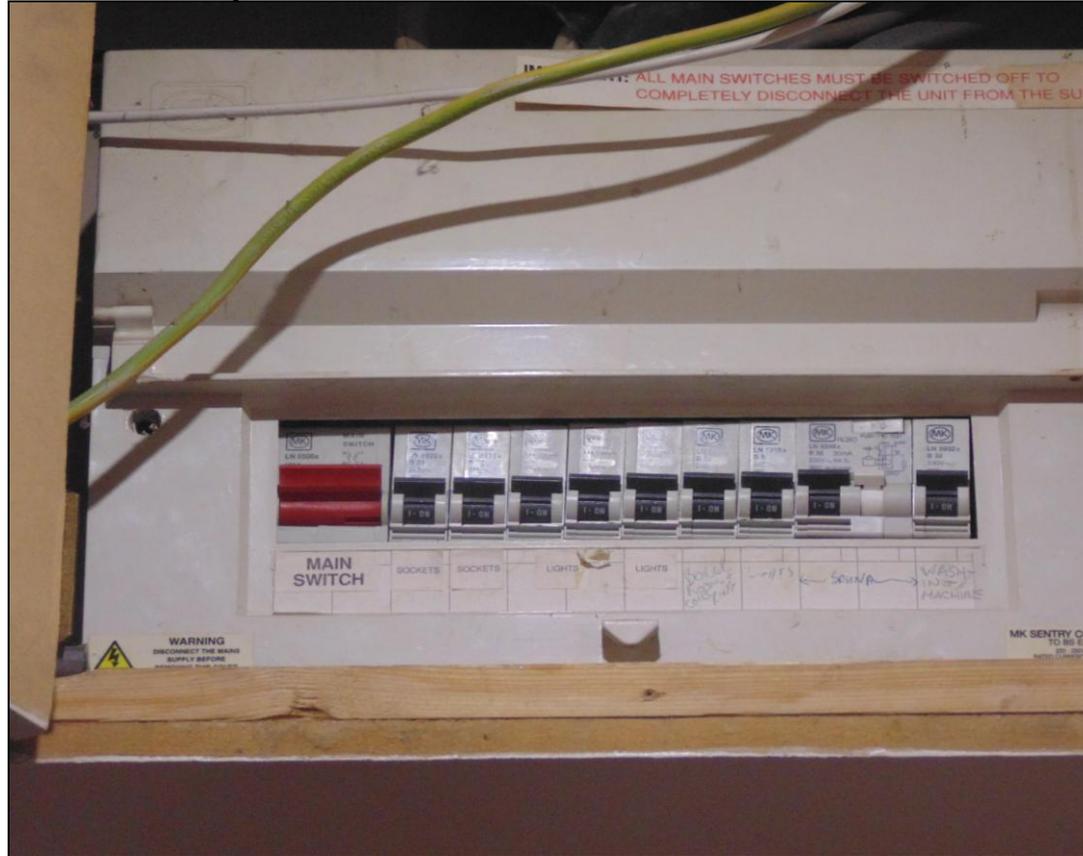
Where applicable, you should confirm whether or not there is a certificate of completion from an NIC EIC registered electrician confirming that circuits were wired to the appropriate IEE Regulations. It should however be borne in mind that Regulations change frequently and that the wiring circuits may not comply to the latest Regulations. We cannot in any event confirm the condition or functioning of the wiring circuits in the absence of a specialist test. If there is no record of an electrical test having been carried out within the past five years, the installation should be tested to NIC EIC standards.

The property is believed to be connected to the main electrical supply. We noted MCB's and RCD's with examples to be found in the garage block and, indeed, parts of the ground floor accommodation. Please note that without the benefit of a specialist report we are not able to comment on the overall condition or standard of installation. If there is no record of an electrical test having been carried out within the past five years, we do recommend that the installation be tested by a suitably competent electrician (preferably NIC EIC registered) with all recommendations implemented. Thereafter, the installation should be retested every five years.

Surface laid wiring is present in the boiler room which should ideally be channelled into walls or placed within plastic conduits.

We understand that the property was fully rewired between 1998 and 2000 by the current owners.

MCB's internally



MCB's internally



## **Gas**

It is recommended that enquiries are made of the local Gas Board with regard to the age and likely condition of all systems and pipework connected to this property and their recommendations followed with regard to checking and servicing systems prior to proceeding further.

The property is believed to be connected to the main gas supply. As a matter of course it is recommended that the entire gas installation be inspected and made good as necessary by a GAS SAFE registered contractor. Thereafter the installation should be serviced annually.

The gas meter is located in the boiler room.

## **Plumbing and Heating**

Our inspection was naturally limited to areas completely visible and we were therefore unable to inspect plumbing covered eg. by panelling or beneath floorboards etc. We are therefore unable to comment with regard to condition and potential leaking. Naturally in older style properties, it is quite possible that obsolete lead pipework which can have an adverse affect upon health is connected, eg. cold water feed pipework etc. With regard to central heating systems, it is recommended that the system to include all plumbing and radiators etc is fully tested and serviced by a suitable central heating specialist eg. Corgi Approved for gas systems, prior to proceeding further.

The plumbing where visible comprises copper pipework with PVC waste pipes and traps. We found no indication of significant leaking at the time of our survey although the majority of pipework is concealed in ducts and floors and was not accessible for inspection.

Given the concealed nature of plumbing we are not able to categorically confirm that no lead pipework exists within this building. Should this be encountered during any future repairs then consideration should be given to upgrading with modern copper or PVC pipe runs.

The stop cock and other controlling valves have not been inspected or tested for operational effectiveness. It is important that their presence be established in case of bursts or leaks.

There is a gas fired central heating system powered by three boilers (two Vaillant and one Worcester) together with two mains pressure hot water storage tanks in the boiler room. These are linked in a circuit to steel panel and decorative antique style radiators. Our superficial inspection of this system revealed no indication to suggest any serious defects although functional tests were not carried out at the time of our survey. On this basis you are strongly recommended to instruct a suitably competent GAS SAFE

registered contractor to carry out appropriate tests, prior to exchange of contracts, to ensure that the system is in satisfactory and safe working order. Thereafter, a regular maintenance contract should be placed with an approved heating engineer.

There are rather ugly gas heaters in the Court Room which you will doubtless wish to change.

### **Modern boilers/water tanks**



### **Ugly heating arrangement in Court Room**



### **Sanitary Appliances**

There are many sanitary fittings throughout the property including ensembles in the guest rooms, a Jacuzzi/WC suite, first floor shower/WC together with a ground floor bathroom/WC serving the “jail rooms”. Fittings were generally in satisfactory condition although slight damage is present to the basin in the jail bathroom. You have no doubt made your own assessment of the current arrangement and will doubtless wish to alter certain rooms/fittings in accordance with your own particular requirements for the building.

Please note that all seals around sanitary fittings should be maintained intact to prevent the risk of water penetration affecting adjacent timber and plasterwork.

## STATUTORY MATTERS

We are not aware of any adverse planning, highway or other statutory proposals which are likely to adversely affect the property although these matters should be confirmed by your Solicitor prior to exchange of contracts.

It is important to ascertain as to whether the property is within proximity of a mobile telephone mast. These can be concealed in obscure places to include within chimneys, burglar alarms and drainpipes as well as places such as church spires, petrol station canopies and tree tops. Although current advice is that there is no evidence that these masts threaten health, opposition to them is growing across the UK. Apart from a potential adverse affect upon health there could be an adverse affect upon value.

The National Radiological Protection Board has identified the area in which the property is situated as one which, in more than one percent of dwellings, the levels of Radon gas entering the property may be such that remedial action is recommended. We cannot comment on Radon gas within this property and you may wish for tests to be arranged through The National Radiological Protection Board.

The property is located in or close to an area of former coal mining activity. Written reports on mine workings in the vicinity should be obtained from The Coal Authority/Bristol Coal Mining Archives Limited. Our report assumes that the property is not shown to be at risk of movement from previous mine workings.

Ownership of the various boundaries around the site should be ascertained so that you are aware of your responsibilities in this respect.

Please note that the property is subject to a listing and this should be discussed with your legal advisers.

Details regarding the shared access road should also be clarified by your legal advisers.

Your legal advisers should make specific enquiries regarding any previous issues/treatment with Japanese knotweed on the site.

## SUMMARY

The property is a large listed former Courthouse/police station located in the well established village of Temple Cloud. It offers good sized and flexible living accommodation which has been subject to a degree of refurbishment over the past few years. The current layout is suitable for the current bed and breakfast arrangement although you have no doubt made your own plans and may wish to alter certain areas dependant upon your own particular taste.

Inevitably, with a building of this age and type, there will be the requirement for ongoing maintenance, particularly in relation to the older exterior parts. It is important that further investigation be carried out by suitably competent contractors in relation to items detailed in the survey. These include roof repairs, overhaul of external stonework and pointing, improvement of external joinery and redecorations together with repair of rainwater goods.

In relation to extensions and alterations which have been carried out in the past, we strongly recommend that you liaise with your legal advisers to ensure that said works have been undertaken with appropriate permissions and consents, particularly given its listed status.

We understand that you may wish to remove some walls in the study and adjacent reception room. We have examined this and would be happy to discuss this further with yourselves in due course.

## **FULL BUILDING SURVEY CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT**

This report is presented on the basis of the following conditions:-

1. We have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure and services which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible. We are, therefore, unable to report that any such part of the property is free from defects. It should be appreciated that there are parts of all structures which cannot be inspected fully and whilst a careful survey was made, our inspection will be limited in those properties that are occupied, fully furnished or have close fitting carpeting or covering to floors.
2. The Report will not purport to express an opinion about or to advise upon the condition of uninspected parts and should not be taken as making any implied representation or statement about such parts.
3. That it was not possible to inspect the interiors of the chimney flues.
4. This report is for your use and whilst it may be shown to other professional advisors acting for your, the contents are not to be disclosed to, nor made use of, by any third party without our express prior written consent. Without such consent, we cannot accept responsibility to any third party.
5. When carrying out an inspection of a flat, the inspection will include the interior of the subject flat, all communal areas and services where accessible, together with external grounds, boundaries, outbuildings, etc. We exclude the interiors of other flats within the property unless they are relevant to the subject flat.
6. No tests to services have been undertaken and our observations are based on a superficial and visual inspection only. The Surveyor will not be responsible for arranging specialist tests of drains, gas supply, plumbing, electrical wiring, switch gear, domestic hot water or central heating systems.
7. In making this report, the following assumptions will be made:-
  - (a) That no high alumina cement or calcium chloride additive or other detrimental material was used in the construction of the property.
  - (b) It should be noted that there are high levels of potentially dangerous 'Radon' gas isolated parts of the South West. We are not able to undertake tests and suggest that specialist advice is therefore obtained as required.
  - (c) That the property is not subject to any usual or especially onerous restrictions, encumbrance or outgoings.
  - (d) That the property and its value are unaffected by any matter which should be revealed by a local search and replies to the usual enquiries or by any statutory notice.

8. Any recommended repair estimates or investigations advised within the report should be undertaken prior to exchange of contracts.
9. Complaints Handling Procedure. A copy of the firm's complaints handling procedure is available on request.

## MAINTENANCE

It is essential to maintain a building in good repair in order to protect one's investment and to alleviate serious defects becoming established. On this basis periodic inspections should take place and for your assistance we detail below the following items:-

### **EXTERNALLY**

#### **Chimney Stacks**

Carry out regular inspections of flashings to chimney stacks to ensure that they are not lifting as this will cause damp penetration. A high level of care should take place if chimney pots are handled as they are made of clay, heavy and often brittle.

#### **Roof**

Repairs to the roof itself should be carried out by specialist firms of contractors. It is recommended that the roof space is examined at least once a year in respect of timbers as well as the plumbing contained therein. Diligent attention is required where a centre valley configuration exists and particular attention should be paid to cracked and dislodged tiles/slates as well as hip and ridge tiles. It should be ensured that there is adequate ventilation into roof void areas as any ingress of water could result in dry rot becoming established.

#### **Rainwater Equipment**

Inspect and clear rainwater gutters at least once a year to remove leaves and debris. Ensure that joints are sound and well secured to brackets and regularly redecorate metal goods.

#### **External Joinery**

Timbers subject to wet rot can be far more serious than is often thought. It is essential, therefore, to replace and repair defective joinery and to carry out regular redecoration. It is generally accepted that late summer is the best time to redecorate when woodwork is at its driest. Ideally all paintwork should be burnt off, treated and sealed and primed prior to redecoration.

#### **Brickwork**

Pointing between brickwork should be checked and if cracked, repaired. Any defective bricks should be renewed with suitable second-hand matching bricks. Defective external finishes such as render should be made good in order to ensure that the building stays waterproof.

A particular problem which is now becoming apparent is wall tie failure. Particularly in houses that are approximately 50 years old. Unfortunately in reports prepared in respect of properties of a cavity construction, it is not possible to comment upon the condition of wall ties, although we would be pleased to put you in touch with a specialist firm. Failure often takes the form of increasing gaps along the horizontal mortar lines and this should be particularly monitored.

It is import to periodically walk around the house to ensure that air bricks are clear of blockage and that the external levels are well below the damp proof course.

## **Drains**

Lift inspection chambers at least twice a year and ensure that there is no blockage.

## **INTERNALLY**

### **Dampness**

Inspect for any signs of damp staining which is usually due to the following items:-

- a) External penetration.
- b) Internal leaks.
- c) Condensation.

Dampness can lead to fungal attack and deterioration to both the integrity of the structure and decorations. If there is evidence of dampness, initially trace it to the source and rectify it immediately. Damp penetration can lead to decay to unexposed timbers and can cause dry rot. It is usual that free estimates can be obtained by specialist firms of damp proofing experts and if it is considered that the matter is serious, a firm of this type should be contacted immediately.

### **Timber Infestation**

Usually the most serious form of infestation is dry rot. It thrives in damp, unventilated and humid conditions where fungus will breed. This fungus removes the moisture out of the timber and forces it to loose all its inherent strength. It can spread within a building, through plasterwork and walls in a very short period of time and repair work is normally extremely expensive and can run into many thousands of pounds. It is not uncommon for a serious attack of dry rot to become established in weeks rather than months.

There is an increasing degree of woodworm infestation, especially in view of recent mild winters and available timbers should be checked on a regular basis, eg under stairs and roof void, etc. Treatment with the benefit of a long guarantee can be undertaken by a specialist firm of eradicators and again normally a free inspection can be obtained.

### **Floors**

When floorboards become loose, it is recommended that they are resecured in order to prevent accidents and so as not to result in undue wear to carpets and other floor coverings.

### **Services**

All services should be regularly inspected in the interest of safety and it is essential that annual servicing takes place to central heating boilers in order to ensure that the system is operating. as efficiently as possible as this will cut fuel bills.

**OSBORNE IRISH ASSOCIATES**  
Chartered Surveyors

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**M O'HARA, BSc MRICS**