

# **BUILDING SURVEY**

**on**

**Reading  
Berkshire RG6 7HP**

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## 1.0 SUMMARY

### 1.1 Conclusion and Recommendations

The property is a Cooks built detached three bedroom house, understood to have been constructed in 1951, which has been extended to the rear, probably during the 1980's. The property is set back a reasonable distance off the road and enjoys a relatively generous plot, the majority of which is to the rear. The property has been modernized to a reasonable standard over a series of years.

The property is one of many substantial detached individual buildings, all apparently built in the early 1950's. Many of the properties surrounding this building have been extended. The Cooks built properties were of two basic designs.

The original property was constructed to a reasonable standard and is presented in an acceptable condition. The exceptions to this being the likelihood of water ingress at the junction between the two chimney stacks and the roof coverings, and the possibility that rainwater is passing down and into the flat roof structure. Also that the electrics, central heating and hot water services, together with the kitchen and bathrooms are all quite dated and would benefit from improvement.

The property has been extended at the rear in order to enlarge the kitchen and living room. A new shower room and study have also been provided. In forming the openings in the rear external wall, it is likely that the former door and window openings have been utilised. The latter would have involved removing the original brickwork below the former window down to, or below, the new floor level. In doing so inadequate attention to the waterproof detailing has been undertaken, so leading to rising damp within the kitchen and shower room as noted. It will be necessary to remove the affected plasters and introduce additional measures to prevent the replacement wall plasters from becoming affected by rising ground water. At that time, some minor modification to the original floor levels within the living room might be undertaken to remove the rise step up into the extension.

It is likely that the rear extension was constructed within the 1980's. The damp proof course is of reinforced plastic, which was in common use at that time. As such, it is likely that the foundations are a minimum of 1 meter in depth as required by the 1985 Building Regulations. The actual depth of the foundations would not be known unless a trial hole is dug to expose them. This has not been done. You are recommended to have a

trail hole dug especially if the foundations to the flank walls are to be incorporated within the proposed major works.

At the time that the rear extension was constructed, it is likely that the majority of the windows and external doors were replaced for the current double-glazed aluminium with hardwood surrounds. Also at the time, the former porch recess was in-filled, thereby enlarging the entrance hall.

You are proposing to demolish the existing garage and rear extension in order to considerably enlarge the property to the left hand side and rear. The left hand extension will incorporate an integral garage with a pair of bedrooms each having an en-suite shower room over. With careful attention to detail, it might be possible to create one or both of the ceilings above the bedroom to have a 'cathedral' ceiling. This would be vaulted in that the plasterboard would follow the underside of the rafters, albeit that insulation slab would need to be incorporated to achieve modern thermal regulation standards.

The existing main roof has a paper based roof lining. This is presented in fair condition despite a number of small areas of damage. The clay tiles are also presented in reasonable condition despite some obvious signs of age wear in the form of moss. The roof timbers are sound and have been well constructed. However, the rafters are somewhat slender, being only 38 mm (1½") wide. These may require additional strengthening from below if the new roofs were to span onto these and take their support from them.

Given this likelihood, and your desire to use the roof space to provide additional accommodation (to safeguard the financial outlay), I consider that you would be best advised to strip the existing roof covering and replace the paper based roof lining for a modern one, possibly incorporating the ability to breath. Also, given the extent of the new roof coverings and the fact that the existing roof tiles are over fifty years old, you are probably best advised to replace these tiles with new.

Given the extent of these works, and the likelihood that the existing roof structure will require some additional strengthening together with the need for a new structural floor to the second floor accommodation, you might best be advised to remove the entire existing roof and install attic trusses, which would have the bottom chord of sufficient depth to act as floor joists. Dependent upon the extent of the second floor accommodation, it may not be possible to install attic trusses to the roof space over the existing structure and to one or both of the perpendicular roofs at the same time. This is because the timbering arrangement where each pair of roofs meets becomes very complicated.

Within the report, I have advised that you have a qualified electrician inspect the electrical installation. While the electrical system has been extended to what would appear to be a professional standard, some DIY improvements have been undertaken, also the original fuse board has been retained. Given that you are likely to occupy the property for some months before development works can be undertaken, you are advised to have an electrical safety check undertaken, for peace of mind at the very least.

For the same reason, I have also advised that you have a CORGI registered heating engineer assess the adequacy of the ventilation to the open flued boiler as this does not appear ideal, also I have advised that you have the boiler serviced as the service history has not been established.

The staircase arrangements leading to the second floor will require some thought. It is not possible to simply introduce a new staircase of the same design as currently, directly over the existing staircase as this would mean that the straight flight of the upper staircase would oversail the landing and cut off access to the rear bedroom. It was noted that the proposed ground and first floor plans indicate a much larger entrance hall, stairwell and landing. It is anticipated that an entirely new ground and first floor staircase be introduced in keeping with the size and grandeur of the proposed finished building.

You are recommended to undertake the following:

- a) Engage a local experienced roofer to provide a quotation for making water tight the junction between the main roof and the two chimney stacks, due to the apparent water ingress, notably to the living room.
- b) Instruct the roofing contractor to look at the weatherproofing arrangement at the junction between the flat roof covering and the soil and vent pipe, due to the possibility that water may be coming down through here.
- c) Engage a qualified NICEIC electrician to test the electrical system for safety. It is not considered likely that any improvements would be undertaken at this stage.
- d) Engage a qualified CORGI heating engineer to inspect the natural air provision to the open flue gas boiler as this may be inadequate. Also to check the boiler operates safely. This might also incorporate an annual service.
- e) Improve the levels of insulation to the main roof space.

- f) Improve the levels of insulation to the underside of the skillings and flat roof.
- g) Renew the water-affected plasters within the kitchen and shower room with a hard render finish, having a waterproof additive. In addition, a vertical DPC should be installed,

Ordinarily, in this section I would reiterate many comments to improve or upgrade elements of the property as noted later within the report. However, I am mindful of your plans to comprehensively modernise and extend the property in the not too distant future.

In providing this summary of the report it should be recognised that this is not a fully itemised list of all matters contained in the main body of the report.

The inspection was as comprehensive as was practicable bearing in mind the property was occupied and furnished. While some floor coverings were turned back no floorboards were raised. It is physically impossible to examine every part of each timber and those parts of the property that are covered, unexposed or inaccessible, including the wall ties as discussed.

No assessment has been made of High Alumina Cement, concrete or calcium chloride additives, blue asbestos or other toxic substances or materials or other deleterious material that may be present in the construction. Some old paints contain lead.

This report is for the use of the parties to whom it is addressed and no responsibility is accepted to any third party for the whole or any part of its content.

#### 1.02 Solicitors Enquiries

In addition to the standard searches and enquiries made by your solicitor, they should investigate the following specific items:

- a) Confirm the property has a freehold tenure with no onerous encumbrances, restrictions or outgoing attached and that vacant possession will be given on completion.
- b) Identify the position and ownership of the boundaries so that you will be aware of your future maintenance responsibilities.
- c) Confirm that the property received any necessary planning consent and Building Regulation approval for the construction of the rear

extension and that a Building Regulation completion certificate was issued.

- d) Confirm that an easement for maintenance purposes is available for maintenance to the side elevation, including roof coverings, eaves joinery and rainwater good where this abuts the boundary to ##.

## **2.0 GENERAL**

### **2.1 Instructions**

The purpose of this report is to advise on the structural condition and state of repair of the property. The inspection has been carried out in accordance with the instructions received, a copy of which has been appended to this report.

Instructions were received from Mr & Mrs ## prior to their proposed purchase of the freehold interest.

### **2.2 Limitations**

This report is provided for the private and confidential use of the client. I accept responsibility for the client alone, that the report is prepared with the skill, care and diligence to be expected of a competent chartered surveyor and accept no responsibility whatsoever to any person other than the client. The report should not be reproduced in part or in whole, or relied upon by third parties without the prior written consent of the client or A E J P Surveyors Ltd (and such persons rely upon the report at their own risk).

Directions left or right are taken as if one is standing on ## facing the property. For reference purposes, the front door of the property is taken to face approximately west to the road.

All measurements and dimensions are approximate or nominal only and should not be relied upon where accuracy is required.

### **2.3 Extent of Report**

The report should be construed as a comment on the overall condition of the property and the quality of its structure at the time of the survey. It is not an inventory of every single defect, many of which would not significantly affect the value of the property.

The inspection has been restricted to those parts of the structure, which were accessible, exposed or uncovered at the time of the inspection. Thus, I have not opened up any concealed surfaces by removing plaster, timber boxing or raising any floor covering. The property was un-occupied, however, it was furnished with floor coverings to most rooms. The roof space is unconverted and the majority of cupboards were full. I am unable to report that any unexposed or inaccessible parts of the property are free from defect.

### **3.0 DATE OF REPORT**

The inspection was carried out on Friday 8 September 2006.

### **4.0 WEATHER**

The weather was dry, sunny and warm following a period of generally settled weather.

### **5.0 THE PROPERTY**

#### **5.1 Description**

The property is a two-storey detached Cooks built house, understood to have been constructed in 1951. It was enlarged by a single-storey rear extension, probably around twenty years ago.

#### **5.2 Situation**

The house is located in an established residential area, being built upon land formerly owned by the Bearwood Estate. The property is located close to, and within the catchment area of, Maiden Erlegh School. This is a much sought-after school having an excellent reputation. Properties within this area usually attract a premium as they are sought after. This premium increases with value, style and location of the property.

Many local convenience stores, public houses, petrol stations and bus routes are all within reasonable walking distances. The busy A329M motorway is relatively close by. Constant background noise should be anticipated, which may be heavier at certain times of the day. The property is also located close to the mainline railway linking London to Bristol. The noise of passing trains will also be made. Earley station is less than half a mile from the property. The property is also close to some flight paths serving Heathrow International Airport. Aircraft noise should be anticipated. The property is located close to a turning point for aircraft lining up to land at Heathrow. Depending upon the wind conditions, aircraft noise may be experienced on a regular basis.

### 5.3

#### Access

The property is accessed at the front, from ##. This is a made up, private road. It is assumed that each of the residents of ## is required to contribute to any maintenance costs. Immediately in front of this property is a shared shingle drive serving this and many of the adjacent properties. It is assumed that only those properties, which are accessed from this shingle drive, would contribute to its upkeep.

## 6.0 CONSTRUCTION

The house is traditionally constructed with cavity walls. Those to both the original part and the rear extension are probably formed of an outer skin of brick and an inner skin of blockwork, having a cavity gap, and plastered internally. The original house is provided with a twin pitched, plain clay tile roof, provided with hipped (sloping) ends. The rear extension has a felt flat roof covering. There is a suspended timber first floor and solid concrete ground floor throughout, to both the original part and the extension.

## 7.0 ACCOMMODATION

### 7.1 Ground Floor

Entrance porch

Entrance hall with radiator and low understairs cupboard, stairs leading to first floor

Triple aspect living room having radiators, open fireplace, wide arch where extended into the rear extension, patio doors to the rear garden and door to:

Study with radiator

Dining room with open fireplace and radiator

Kitchen/breakfast room with sink, base and wall units, gas fired boiler (not tested), many fitted and loose standing appliances (not tested), radiator and door to outside

Shower room having WC, wash hand basin, shower enclosure and radiator

7.2 First Floor

Landing with door to airing cupboard having lagged hot water cylinder

Three bedrooms each with radiator, one with loft access hatch, a second with fitted wardrobes

Family bathroom having bath, wash hand basin and radiator

Separate WC

7.3 Outside

The property has a detached single garage, aluminium greenhouse, small detached timber shed and lean-to storage between the main house and the garage. There is an enclosed front garden with off-road parking for multiple vehicles and enclosed rear garden with side pedestrian access.

**8.0 COUNCIL TAX BANDING**

The property falls within the jurisdiction of Wokingham District Council, Shute End, Wokingham, Berkshire. The Council Tax Band is not known, nor is the tax payable. These details were not indicated upon the estate agent's details. You or your solicitor should make enquiries.

**9.0 TENURE**

I assume that the tenure of the property is freehold. However, I have not seen the title deeds and therefore I am unable to comment on any onerous encumbrances, restrictions or outgoings attached.

**10.0 LEGISLATION**

I am not aware of any adverse planning, environmental, health or other statutory matters, which would affect the property, although I have not made specific enquiries.

Your solicitor should confirm that planning consent and Building Regulation consents were obtained for the rear extension, together with issue of the Building Regulation completion certificate.

## **11.0 SPECIAL HAZARDS**

### **11.1 Subsidence and Settlement**

According to the British Geological survey sheet no. 268 for the area, the sub-soil is likely to comprise of consolidated sand and pebble beds, known as Boyn Hill Gravel. However, the accuracy of the survey sheet is not guaranteed and there is always a risk that weaker soils could overlie these soils. A degree of natural subsidence may occur in this neighbourhood, no specific details are known. A detailed environmental report might be obtained.

Most buildings suffer some degree of settlement, i.e. downward movement after they are built, due to compaction of the ground under the weight of the building. Normally such movements are relatively minor and will occur early in the life of the building so that a house of this age would, by now, have reached essentially a stable state.

A careful inspection of the internal and external wall surfaces was undertaken. Please see section 14.01 (Movement).

### **11.2 Coal Mining**

The property is not situated in a coal mining area.

### **11.3 Flooding**

According to the Environment Agency, there is no indicated river flood plain within 300 meters of this property.

### **11.4 Ground Heave and Tree Roots**

I found no evidence of ground heave or tree root action from this inspection.

### **11.5 Land Slip**

I found no evidence of land slip conditions affecting the property.

### **11.6 Radon Gas**

Radon gas is a naturally occurring radioactive gas, which is normally associated with areas based on granite rock sub soils. The area in which the subject property is situated has not been identified by the Radiological

Protection Board as one in which there is a high risk of Radon gas entering houses and therefore no further action is considered necessary.

#### 11.7 Asbestos

Asbestos products have often been used in building construction. It can be difficult to identify products containing asbestos, particularly if they are covered or painted. Inhalation of asbestos fibres is hazardous to health and therefore great care should be taken in any operations, which involve disturbance or removal of materials suspected of containing asbestos. Specialist advice should be sought before undertaking such work. Dealing with asbestos can be expensive. No indication of materials suspected of containing asbestos fibres was identified.

This report is not an asbestos survey. Given the age of the property, the soffit boards that is, the horizontal board at the junction between the roof and the main external walls; it is likely to be formed of a cement based sheet, which probably contains asbestos fibres. The soffits of the main house have been over-clad with low maintenance PVCu. The original materials may have been disguised behind this. You are recommended to not drill into the PVC without prior investigation, as this would release harmful fibres into the atmosphere, if this original material remains.

#### 11.8 Lead

Lead is a poison and studies have shown that very high levels of lead can cause serious ill health. Lead was once used a pigment in house paints, although its use has gradually reduced since the 1950's. There is accordingly a risk that there could be lead paint in the property, which has subsequently been over-coated with modern lead-free paint. From my inspection, I found that the paint surfaces are generally in good condition. Care will need to be taken when preparing previously painted surfaces to prevent the inhalation of dust containing lead particles.

#### 11.9 Contamination

I am not aware of the content of any environmental audit, or other environmental investigation or soil survey, which may have been carried out on the subject property or nearby, which may draw attention to any contamination or the possibility of such contamination. I am not aware of any factors, which might suggest that the subject property has been affected by contamination but I have not carried out any specific investigations in the past or present uses, either of the property or any neighbouring land on this matter. This report therefore assumes that no contamination exists. However, should it subsequently be established that contamination, seepage or pollution exists at the property or on adjoining

land, or that the property has been put to a contaminative use, this might have a material affect on the saleability and value of the property.

## **12.0 OCCUPATION**

The property is currently vacant. I assume that vacant possession would be given on completion.

## **13.0 FIRE INSURANCE**

No instruction has been given to me to provide a figure for fire insurance purposes. This can be provided if required. It is recommended that the reinstatement cost is index-linked and that it is re-assessed every five years.

## **STRUCTURE AND CONDITION OF THE PROPERTY**

### **14.0 GENERAL MATTERS**

#### **14.1 Movement**

The ground surrounding the property is generally flat with a slight rise up to the west. Generally, there are no signs of cracking associated with structural movement. There are signs of possible re-pointing below the bathroom window. This may have been as a consequence of forming the wide opening within the kitchen below. The re-pointing is not recent and shows no signs of subsequent opening up.

There is a nominal degree of cracking to the creasing tiles, soldier bricks and a number of bricks above the creasing tiles over the kitchen external door. The reason for this is not entirely clear as this would appear to be an as built door opening and is assumed to have been built with a lintel. The soldier brick course, and consequentially the creasing tiles over, may rely upon the timber sub-frame to this door for a degree of support.

Over time, timber can dry out. The cracking may be as a consequence of this. The degree of cracking is relatively minor. A number of bricks, close to the left hand end of this opening, have dropped approximately 4 mm to 5 mm. This is not considered to be progressive. Minor repairs in the form of re-pointing or clear mastic sealant might be provided.

#### **14.2 Woodworm, Fungal Decay and Other Timber Defects**

I found evidence of historic infestation by common furniture beetle (woodworm) to some ceiling joists within the roof space. One in

particular is quite badly affected. It should be noted that the roof insulation quilt, placed between the joists, now largely obscures these. Beetle infestation may be more wide spread than could be seen. The lack of current activity suggests that the timbers have been chemically treated. You should ask your legal adviser to check for any guarantees available for such work.

The rafters and ceiling joists are relatively slim by modern standards, being only 38 mm (1½") wide rather than the more usual 50 mm (2"). The reason for this is the materials shortages imposed for the first few years after the end of the Second World War. Despite this, there are no signs of deflection to the rafters, probably due to the presence of the purlin, that is the stout horizontal timber beam, placed at mid-rafter span to provide additional support.

The original high level eaves joinery has been comprehensively over-clad with low maintenance PVCu. It was not possible to determine whether the original timber eaves joinery had been removed. If this has been retained, then a degree of fungal decay may have occurred, in which case this will still be present. The reduced degree of air circulation to any such damp and decaying timbers may well have accelerated the rate of decay. Some joinery repair may be required upon opening up.

At the time of construction it was common practice to use a cement-based board at the soffit (horizontal board between the vertical fascia and the external brick wall). Such boards frequently contained asbestos fibres. Please see earlier comments regarding the avoidance of damage to these boards at Section 11.07 (Asbestos).

The eaves joinery to the rear extension is also formed of low maintenance plastics. Given the age of construction, no asbestos-based products would have been used.

The hardwood sub-frames to the aluminium double-glazed windows and door would each appear to be presented in reasonable condition with no obvious signs of decay. Some signs of decay may become apparent upon closer inspection when the re-decorations are next undertaken.

Similar comments apply also to the external doors.

No signs of beetle infestation could be identified to the first floor floorboards, not all of the carpets were lifted. Some of the carpets were glued down, furniture was also present. However, a number of floorboards are loose, where they are riding upon their nail fixing. Ideally, some additional fixings might be added, in the form of screws, when the carpets are next renewed.

### 14.3

#### Insulation

Glass fibre insulation quilt is laid between the ceiling joists within the roof space. This was originally 25 mm (1") thick. Additional quilt has been laid to an approximate depth of 150 mm (6"). Modern thermal regulations now require a minimum thickness of 250 mm (10") of this material. Some additional insulation might be added. Some gaps are also present.

It should be noted that the insulation detail to the flat roof has not been identified. Given the apparent age of construction with no subsequent signs of insulation, the insulation levels here are likely to be considerably below modern regulation standards. Significant heat loss should be anticipated through here. Consideration might be given to the introduction of 50 mm of high performance rigid insulation slab placed immediately below the ceiling finishes having an additional plasterboard backing for later decoration.

Alternatively, when the flat roof covering is next renewed, similar insulation slab may be placed on top of the chipboard decking, below the waterproofing detail. If this course of action were to be taken, then appropriate ventilation of what would then become a warm roof void would be necessary.

The degree of insulation to the skillings that is, the sloping ceilings to the first floor, could not be identified. It is very likely that, due to the limited headroom at the perimeter of the roof space and the shallow depth of the rafters, there is no insulation present here. Extensive heat loss will be occurring, through the skillings.

Consideration might be given to the introduction of high performance rigid insulation board, placed between the rafters from within the roof space being a maximum of 50 mm thereby retaining a 50 mm air gap between the top surface of the insulation and the underside of the roof lining felt. This is to ensure an adequate flow of air across the roof space, which is designed to remove condensation. Ideally, a further high performance insulation board should be placed below the skillings have a plasterboard backing for decoration.

The external walls of the original building would have been built without any form of cavity insulation. The same may also be the case for the rear extension. There is no sign of any remedial cavity fill insulation, which would be indicated by periodic repairs to the external pointing, notably around window and door openings, where the material would have been injected into the cavity. Consideration might be given to undertaking this, in order to reduce heat loss.

It is also very likely that the solid concrete ground floor was built without any form of insulation. Downward heat loss through here should be anticipated. It is unlikely that the floor of the extension has any insulation within it.

Each of the external windows and doors is double-glazed. It should be noted that the vacuum seals could not be guaranteed. Each of these pre-dates 2002 and would not meet current thermal regulations. It is understood that you intend to replace these with modern PVCu. This would be a Building Regulation requirement and would have to satisfy minimum heat loss requirements.

#### 14.4

##### Dampness

A damp proof course (DPC) is a physical layer designed to prevent ground water from rising up through the walls into the house. The original building was built having a bituminous felt DPC. This is largely obscured by a wide mortar fillet. This is poor practice in that it can allow ground water to track up above the DPC. Some areas of this have fallen away, notably below the living room front window. The DPC to the rear extension is similarly obscured by a wide mortar fillet. This is formed of reinforced plastic. A small area of this is exposed, adjacent to the inspection chamber covers.

Ideally, ground levels should be kept at least 150 mm below the height of the damp proof course to prevent it from being bridged. Generally, external ground levels are sufficiently below the DPC. However, the level of the front garden, adjacent to the living room, is relatively high. Ideally, this should be graded back to increase the gap. Similar comments apply also to the paved front entrance hard standing below the porch structure. However this should be relatively sheltered by the porch over, it is not considered necessary to lower the ground here.

Periodic measurements were taken with an electronic moisture meter, at the base of the external walls, principally above skirting levels. Generally, the readings were acceptable being at normal condensation levels, given that the building has been empty for some time. However, areas of dampness were noted, principally to the former rear elevation where now made internal by construction of the rear extension.

Namely, the right hand nib within the kitchen where readings of up to 32.9% wood moisture equivalent (WME) were noted. This is probably where the original DPC has been bridged by the wall plasters. Ground water has been allowed to rise up, resulting in salts, now present on the face of the plasters. Ideally, these plasters should be removed to a height of approximately 1 meter above the internal floor level and should be

replaced by a hard render finish, having a waterproof additive. In addition, a vertical DPC should be installed, so obscuring the DPC from these new plasters, thereby preventing this from re-occurring. The timber skirting here indicates a reading of 18.8% WME. This is marginally below the threshold at which decay can occur to affected timbers. As part of this work, the skirting should be removed and should either be treated with preservative or be replaced by new tanalised timber skirtings.

Further high readings of up to 49.6% WME were noted within the shower room. This again is where an opening has been formed within the original external rear wall. The dampness readings were noted to the left hand side, adjacent to the wash hand basin, they are probably caused by the same fault, as described above. The skirting exhibits dampness levels of up to 27.7% WME. The skirtings here are more at risk of decay. However, there is no sign of decay at this time. Similar comments apply regarding preservation of or renewal of the skirting.

There are no other high dampness readings within the property.

#### 14.5

#### Penetrating Damp

Signs of penetrating damp were noted to the first floor skillings of all three bedrooms. This is probably associated with defective weather proofing at the junction between the two chimney stacks and the roof coverings. Both areas of water ingress would appear to have been ongoing for some time. The plasters to both the skillings and the walls are much affected; there are some signs of salts and discolouration. It is likely that, once the defect has been remedied, the affected plasters will need to be removed and replaced. The salts contained within the plasters will otherwise continue to attract moisture from the air and so will result in continued damage to the decorations.

There is a sign of a past water leak to the ceiling within the study, probably from the flat roof over. This is now completely dry and is assumed to be historic. The decorations will require sealing before they are renewed. Further comments will be made of the condition of this felt roof covering later in the report. The leak may have been associated with the boxing around the SVP, where this passes through the flat roof of the extension. Please see later comments at Section 15.02 (Roof).

It should be noted that a number of radiator feed pipes are buried within the concrete screed. No sign of sheathing to the pipes could be seen. This is normally in the form of PVC or bituminous paint. This is poor practice, as the aggressive chemicals within the concrete can cause corrosion to the copper pipes. The areas around the radiator pipes were tested with an electronic meter. No defect was identified at this time.

#### 14.6 Condensation

There are signs of condensation to many of the windows. This is probably due to the lack of mechanical extract fan provision to the ground floor shower room. Ideally, one might be introduced, ducted to the outside. The kitchen is provided with an extractor hood over the hob position. This would appear to be ducted to the outside air.

The original roof is not provided with any form of cross roof void ventilation at the eaves. This is designed to remove moist air from within the roof space, which could otherwise lead to condensation. Consideration might be given to introducing this. However, the possibility that any original soffit boards that remain below the PVCu cladding should mean that caution should be exercised.

If cross roof void ventilation were to be provided, then the extent of the fibreglass quilt insulation at the roof perimeters should be checked to ensure that airflow is now blocked. If insulation is to be provided between the rafters, above the skillings, then an adequate air gap should be maintained, as noted previously.

#### 14.7 Sub-Floor Ventilation

It is not necessary to maintain sub-floor ventilation as the ground floor is formed of solid concrete.

### **15.0 EXTERNALLY**

#### 15.1 Chimney Stacks, Flues and Fireplaces

There are two brick built chimney stacks. These and the lead weatherproofing appear to be in reasonable condition. There are some minor signs of age wear to the brickwork although some past re-pointing has been undertaken to both stacks. However, despite the apparent sound condition of the lead weatherproofing there are indications of water ingress, as noted internally. You are recommended to have a local experience roofer inspect both locations and, if necessary, provide a quotation for improvements or repairs.

The flue serving the dining room is provided with a clay chimney pot having a rain cap. The flue serving the gas fired boiler is provided with a flue terminal. It should be noted that the twin flue stack serving the dining room and boiler is leaning slightly to the north. This is not excessive and poses no cause for concern. The flue serving the living room is also provided with a clay chimney pot having a rain hood. This second

chimney stack may be a single flue only, built to the same design as the two flue stack for appearance sake only.

The living room fireplace and hearth are provided with a tiled finish. This is presented in reasonable condition although some wear damage has occurred, principally to the left hand side of the hearth. Some other tiles to the hearth are loose and cracked. Some improvements might be made. It is possible that this fireplace has been used for solid fuel fires, despite the current electric log effect fitting. This has not been tested. There is a small amount of soot debris. It is likely this flue will require sweeping. Ideally, the metal plate should be removed to permit through-ventilation in order to remove moisture.

It is assumed that there is no second flue to the chimney stack over the living room. There is no sign of a fireplace to either of the two bedrooms over.

There is a more simple, tiled surround to the dining room fireplace. It would appear as though the original hearth has been removed. This fireplace has probably also been used for solid fuel fires. The cast iron grate is present, behind the hardboard screen. Ideally, this screen and the newspaper that currently blocks the flue should be removed in order to promote a through draught. It is likely this flue will require sweeping.

The enamel flue coming from the boiler is presented in reasonable condition. This connects into the masonry flue over.

## 15.2 Roof

The main roof is twin pitched having hip ends to both left and right. The half round ridge tiles and hip bonnet tiles are presented in reasonable condition. There are some signs of weathering to the cement bedding.

The general condition of the plain tiles is satisfactory. However, there are some minor signs of age wear in the form of moss and algae growth. The roof covering would appear to be sound and weather tight. The only indication of water ingress is at the junction between the two chimney stacks the roof covering, as noted previously.

The plain tiles are believed to be of clay, having a sanded face. The underside of the tiles has not been seen.

The underside of the main roof is provided with a lining paper. This is a bituminised paper-based material, which was in widespread use at the time that the property was constructed. This remains in reasonable condition. However, this material can be prone to tearing and wear damage. Some

small areas of damage were noted. Some of the laps, the joints between the edges of the lining paper, are not well formed as there is no real overlap. If rainwater were to pass beneath the tiles, then this may come inside the property due to this poor detailing. However, this limitation was identified close to the ridge where quantities of water are quite low. No such damage should occur.

There are no obvious signs of water ingress, even where the chimney stacks are built into the roof covering. Due to the position at the very ends of the property and the shape of the roof, the overlap between the roof and the chimney stack is minimal.

The felt flat roof covering to the rear extension is presented in reasonable condition for the age. It should be noted that this type of roof covering has an anticipated life of between twelve and fifteen years. This roof covering is provided with a light coloured stone chipping overlay designed to reflect the heat of the sun and thereby extend the life of the covering. Where it is exposed, the felt roof covering would appear to be in reasonable condition.

It is also provided with a mineralised finish (small fragments of stone embedded at the time of manufacture). However, there is quite a build up of moss growth, notably to the central area. Ideally, this should be removed as the roots can cause damage to felt coverings.

There is also a suitable upstand at the junction between this roof and the main rear external wall together with a suitable lead cover flashing. There is no obvious reason for the apparent water penetration as noted to the ceiling of the study. It is possible that, in the past, someone has stood upon the roof and so punctured the membrane. There is a low level boxing surrounding the soil and vent pipe adjacent to the bathroom window. It is always difficult to provide a weather proof seal around such pipes. It is quite likely that water has come through here. If this detail is to be retained, then you might engage a local roofer experienced at installing and maintaining such roofs to inspect this with a view to possibly improving the weatherproofing here.

The twin pitched front entrance porch roof is provided with a plain tile covering. This too is showing significant signs of moss build up and previous comments apply. This structure is provided with a bituminous felt roof lining, set to a timber supporting frame. All are presented in reasonable condition. There is a suitable stepped lead weatherproofing at the junction between this roof and the main front wall.

### 15.3 Gutters and Downpipes

Rainwater is collected from the base of the main roof slopes by plastic half round gutters, which discharge into round plastic downpipes. Generally, the gutters appear to be adequately aligned and mostly free of significant leaks. However, slight leaks from a number of the joints appear to be occurring. This is due to thermal expansion movement. The rainwater goods are presented in reasonable condition and would appear to have been renewed in recent years.

The downpipes discharge into the ground and are assumed to be linked to soakaways. It should be noted that the front entrance porch roof is not provided with any form of gutters. However, the relatively small extent of roof will not lead to significant amounts of rainwater. Ideally, excess rainwater should be prevented from entering the soil as this can lead to the undermining of the foundations. There is no current sign of such defect.

### 15.4 Main Walls

The main walls are 295 mm to 310 mm thick and are believed to be of cavity construction. They will therefore comprise two leaves of masonry, the outer leaf is brickwork and the inner leaf is blockwork, to both ages of construction. It is normal practice for two leaves of masonry to be held together by a pattern of metal wall ties. In any building of this age, there is a risk that the original wall ties may have begun to corrode, which can de-stabilise the walls. However, the house is in a relatively sheltered position and I saw no evidence of horizontal cracking or bulging to the walls to indicate that any severe corrosion is present. I therefore do not consider that any further investigation is currently justified.

It should be noted that the original recessed front entrance porch has now been made internal following the placement of the arched frame and glazing immediately below the arched detail to the front wall. Previously, the front entrance door was placed further back. In so doing, the creasing tile detail to the top left and right extents of the semi-circular brick arch detail have been cut back in order to permit installation of the timber frame here. Some minor damage has also occurred to the brickwork, although this is relatively nominal. It is also apparent that the brick external front wall projected into the front entrance porch, at low level to both left and right sides of this arched detail. There are signs that the brickwork has been cut down through here. This has been undertaken quite skilfully. There are no signs of damage to the wall plasters or timber skirting due to rising damp where the original DPC has been bridged.

Generally the walls are plumb and free of any significant cracking or distortion. There are a small number of cracks although these are mainly

limited to the soldier brick arches of the kitchen external door and the small dining room flank window. There are further hairline cracks at the junction between the rear extension and the original building. These are believed to be due to initial drying shrinkage cracking and are not considered to be structural or progressive.

The style and colour of brick to the rear extension matches quite closely that of the main building. The walls to both ages of construction are generally presented in reasonable condition. There are some minor signs of modification where past alterations have been made. It is probable that a 'false' section of cavity wall has been formed between the chimney breasts to the left hand flank wall, serving the dining room and kitchen, to create the small alcove within the dining room. It is assumed that the cavity has been adequately formed.

Wide openings have been formed within the former rear external wall at ground floor level to provide entry into the rear extension. It is assumed that former window and door openings have been used, or else the openings were purpose built. In either respect, load bearing lintels are assumed to be present to take the weight of the leaves of masonry over. There are no signs of distress apparent.

Modern practice would require a cavity tray to be installed, immediately above the height of the cover flashing to the rear extension flat roof. This would direct any water that has come down through the cavity wall construction towards the outer skin of brickwork, thus preventing it from passing down the outer leaf of the external wall and thereby into the rear extension roof structure. While there is no obvious indication that this has been undertaken, there is no sign of water penetration to remains of what was the external leaf of masonry. This is not considered to be the cause of the apparent water leak to the study ceiling.

## 15.5 External Joinery

The eaves joinery now consists of low maintenance plastics throughout, to both the main building and the rear extension. The original timber joinery to the main building may have been over-clad. This detail could be not determined. Given the age of the original construction, the soffit boards were probably formed of a cement-based material that would have contained asbestos fibres. Caution should be exercised when removing the plastic eaves joinery or in the formation of eaves ventilation.

It is likely that the original windows were replaced in the 1980's with the current satin anodised aluminium doors and windows, set to stained hardwood sub-frames. These are each presented in reasonable condition with no obvious signs of fungal decay or damage. Each of the doors and

windows is provided with double-glazed sealed units, these could not be guaranteed.

The front entrance door and fixed side windows all have glazings that extend to within 1500 mm of the internal floor level. None of these are marked as being of safety glass as required by current regulations. Ideally, each of these should be replaced. Similar comments apply also to the fully glazed patio doors to the living room. Here, a proprietary safety film might be added. The kitchen external door is also glazed to its full height. These are clearly marked as being of safety glass.

The small flank window, within the dining room is single-glazed only, set to a metal frame within a timber sub-frame. This Crittall style of window was probably installed throughout the property. This remaining example is presented in reasonable condition, with no obvious signs of decay. The single-glazing will be subject to increased heat loss.

The front entrance door, frame and glazings are not the original, they are also not in their original position. They have been located here in order to increase the size of the entrance hall. Previously, the original entrance door and frame were located approximately 1 meter further into the property. The exact location can be seen where the skirting changes profile on the partition to the living room.

## 15.6 External Decoration

The external decorations would appear to have been renewed within recent years. It is presented in reasonable condition. Decorations have now been kept to a minimum. These are now mainly a stained finish, although some gloss decorations remain to the garage. It should not be necessary to renew the external decoration for some years.

## 16.0 INTERNALLY

### 16.01 Roof Spaces

The original roof frame comprises timber rafters being 100 x 38 mm (4" x 1½") running down from the ridge board and hip rafters to the tops of the external outside walls. There is intermediate support in the form of purlins, which are designed to provide additional strengthening. The latter are formed of 100 x 75 mm (4" x 3") to all four sides of the roof. They are probably located at the midway height of the longest rafter. However, they are only approximately one-third of the way up the height of the visible rafters within the main roof space, as they extend down below the line of the first floor ceiling in the form of skillings.

In turn, these purlins are provided with a good number of diagonal timber struts being formed of 100 x 50 mm timbers. These are taken down to timber binders and cross braces, again formed of 100 x 50 mm timbers. Two collars are also present, placed immediately below the purlins.

Despite the relatively slim nature of the rafters, caused by the shortage of materials following the Second World War, the roof structure has been well constructed.

The available headroom between the underside of the ridge board and the top surface of the ceiling joists is approximately 2.34 meters. Even with the need to introduce a new structural floor and insulation between and below the rafters, this should still provide a reasonable amount of room, if this roof space were to be converted to provide additional accommodation.

The ceiling joists are also formed of 100 x 38 mm timbers. These span front to back and are aligned with the feet of the rafter pairs to the front and rear roof slopes. It is assumed that mechanical fixings have been provided to give a degree of triangulation to prevent the feet of the rafters from spreading outwards. This would appear to have been undertaken adequately as there is no gap externally, between the rear face of the soffit and the external face of the main walls. However, a degree of minor roof thrust may have occurred in the past, which has now been disguised by the introduction of the modern PVC claddings.

It should be noted that the rafter feet to the flank roof slope (hip ends) are not restrained by ceiling joists, as they are running at 90 degrees to them. However, two of these rafters are restrained by the pair of binders noted previously. It is assumed that the feet of the flank rafters have been mechanically fixed to a timber plate that sits upon the top of the external brick wall. Again, there is no sign of apparent roof thrust that could be noted externally.

There are some signs of historic beetle infestation as was noted previously. Please see Section 14.02 (Timber defects). There is no sign of current activity in the form of frass, being the bi-product of beetles. It is assumed that past chemical treatment has been undertaken. Part of the roof space has been boarded with chipboard. This does not appear to be of suitable flooring quality. A number of these are damaged. Caution should be exercised when moving through this roof space.

Roof quilt insulation has been placed between the ceiling joists to a depth that now exceeds the height of these joists. Some gaps are present. Many of the ceiling joists can be seen. However, caution should be exercised as not all of them can be seen clearly.

The underside of the plain clay tiles could not be seen due to the presence of the roof lining paper. This material is known to be quite brittle and can be prone to becoming torn and damaged. While a small number of tears can be seen, the lining paper is generally presented in reasonable condition for the style and age. As noted previously, a number of the lap joints have not been formed correctly. These tend to be close to the ridge, at which height the amount of any water passing beyond the tiles should be relatively insignificant.

The relatively large coldwater storage tank does not appear to be located onto an appropriate timber platform. It is assumed that this has been placed over one of the masonry internal partitions. This will therefore be providing a load bearing function. This should be noted if it is intended to remove or adapt this wall.

As noted previously, the ceiling joists are only 100 mm deep. It would be necessary to introduce new floor joists throughout the roof space wherever it is intended that the new floor be formed. These would probably best be laid between steel joists carried off the solid internal partition and external walls. However, it should be noted that the external masonry walls finish below the line of the ceiling joists, as evidenced by the sloping ceiling to the first floor. Therefore any steel beams would have to be 'cranked' i.e. cut and formed at an angle to slope down onto these original walls.

Alternatively, conversion of the roof space should wait until the new extensions have been formed as it is anticipated that the new external walls (or internal partitions) may rise to a higher level. At that time, the existing purlins, binders, struts and collars would probably all be removed. The function of the purlins would be performed by load bearing low eaves walls, probably supported off the steel beams.

Dependent upon the desired arrangements, the steel beams might be placed between the ceiling joists in order to minimise the loss of headroom with the new floor joists spanning between. Alternatively, the new steel beams might be placed at right angles to the ceiling joists, within the low eaves cupboards, thereby allowing the new floor joists to hang down below them, between the existing ceiling joists. Allowing for a new structural floor and insulation below the rafters, an approximate maximum headroom should be anticipated of some 2.1 meters through here.

In forming additional habitable accommodation at second floor level, it would be necessary to provide secondary means of escape. This might be provided at the rear in the form of a skylight to permit egress over the wide valley formed between the new roof structures to the proposed side and rear extensions. Any such roof light should have a minimum width of 450 mm and its lowest openable threshold be placed between 800 mm and

1100 mm off the internal finished floor level. The roof light should ideally be hinged at the top to give at least 450 mm clear headroom.

## 16.2 Ceilings

All of the ceilings are formed of plasterboard provided with a simple skim finish. These are generally presented in reasonable condition despite some signs of past water ingress to both ground and first floors as indicated. Also signs of past water damage to some of the skillings. Some improvement might be made to the finish as noted previously. It may be necessary to re-plaster some areas, alternatively a sealant might be provided in order to prevent the stain from damaging future decorations.

The remaining ceilings are generally presented in reasonable condition despite some signs of nominal shrinkage cracking, notably to board edges and perimeters. Some minor improvements might be undertaken, prior to re-decoration. A new skim finish might be provided to some locations. As noted previously, insulation together with plasterboard backing, might be provided to the underside of the skillings.

Similar comments apply also the ceilings below the flat roof rear extension. Here, the insulation detail has not been identified. This is likely to be considerably below modern regulation standards.

The family bathroom ceiling has been provided with polystyrene tiles. Ideally, these should be removed as they can cause a health hazard in the case of a fire. It is likely that this ceiling will require a plaster skim coat in order to disguise the adhesive dabs.

The ceilings to the rooms within the extension, also the small remaining area of ceiling within the ground floor shower room, have been provided with a swirl effect artex finish. Given the anticipated age of construction, this should not contain asbestos fibres. This is currently presented in reasonable condition for the style. There are a number of popped nail heads to the ceilings within the living room extension and study. This further suggests that the flat roof covering has been subject to foot traffic.

## 16.03 Walls and Partitions

The main outside walls, together with the internal partitions are of masonry construction and provided with a plaster finish. These are generally presented in reasonable condition for the style. The thermal blockwork internal leaf of the rear extension exhibits some minor cracking. There are some minor signs of cracking to the original walls, notably to the front wall within the right hand front bedroom. These are likely to be due to

thermal expansion movement. This is not structural and is not considered to be progressive.

Some of the solid first floor partitions are carried off the floor. These are assumed to have been provided with steel beams placed within the inter-floor void. There is no sign of current distress or cracking to the ground floor ceilings. The projecting masonry nibs, within the living room, are the remnants of the former external rear wall. As noted previously, it is assumed that suitable steel lintels have been introduced to support the weight of the masonry over.

It is likely that the former window or patio door opening has been re-used. Similar comments apply within the ground floor shower room and kitchen. Previous comments have been made regarding the apparent rising damp within the kitchen and shower room caused by bridging of the DPC. Please see earlier comments at Section 14.04 (Rising Damp).

The majority of the internal partitions are solid, being a continuation of the ground floor partitions. These are assumed to be taken down to independent foundations.

#### 16.04 Floors

The first floor is formed of suspended timber. This will therefore comprise floorboards fixed to suspended timber joists. The boards are reasonably level and firm, some signs of board creak as noted previously. There are no indications of beetle infestation. However, it should be noted that not all of the carpets were lifted.

There is a solid concrete floor to the whole of the ground floor, including the extension. There are no apparent defects. It should be noted that, in places, the carpet within the original part of the kitchen and dining room were lifted to reveal woodblock flooring. This does not appear to be present to the entrance hall, which is surprising. This may also be present to the original part of the living room. While these may be exposed and renovated, they might be lead to accidents as they can become slippery.

There is a slight change in height between the original floor level and that of the rear extension, within the living room. This is believed to be an as-built defect. This might be eliminated with the use of a self-levelling screed, principally within the original section of the living room, to even these floors up. There is a slight change in level to the kitchen and cloakroom, although to a lesser degree.

Fitted floor coverings have been installed throughout the property. These are presented in fair condition for the style. Some signs of wear damage can

be noted. Beneath the carpet overlay within the kitchen, a vinyl sheet covering has been laid. This would appear to have been well glued down to the timber flooring. In taking this up, the woodblock floor may become damaged. Some repairs may be found to be necessary.

#### 16.05 Internal Joinery

The majority of the original internal doors and joinery remains. The doors are currently presented in reasonable condition for the style. The two front bedroom doors have been provided with self-closing hinges. These might be removed, as they can swing shut unexpectedly so trapping small fingers.

The winder staircase is currently firm. The hardboard balustrade and quadrant beading may overlie traditional open balustrading. This might be opened up.

There is insufficient space to the first floor landing in which to place a second flight of stairs leading to the proposed second floor unless an alternative design of stairs was to be installed. Alternatively, the landing may be enlarged, necessitating some modification to the door openings to each of the three bedrooms. This would result in making these rooms smaller. Careful consideration should also be made of the skirting over to ensure that adequate headroom can be maintained, to satisfy Building Regulations.

The kitchen has a range of base and wall cabinets of different ages. These are a mixture of solid wood carcasses, doors and draw fronts, also chipboard carcass unit door and drawer fronts with a melamine finish and similar style of worktops. All of the cabinets are dated and in relatively poor condition. Consideration might be given to renewing these and re-planning the kitchen layout.

#### 16.06 Decorations

The decorations are simple and have not been renewed for some time. They are generally in a fair condition.

### 17.0 SERVICES

The services have not been tested. No guarantees could be given as to their efficiency, safety or compliance with current regulations. A prudent purchaser would be well advised to have the condition of the services checked by specialists before making a legal commitment to purchaser. The following points were noted from the superficial inspection.

### 17.01 Electricity

Mains connected with a meter located in the small understairs cupboard. The distribution board is located alongside. This is fitted with the original fusible link fuses, an earth leakage circuit breaker switch has also been installed. The wiring is in PVC although this will not meet current earthing regulation standards. It would appear as though the property has been re-wired in the past, although further modification in the form of surface fixed wiring to additional sockets has also been undertaken. It is likely that such improvements have been undertaken by a DIY enthusiast. You are recommended to engage an NICEIC qualified electrician to test and report upon the electrics. This should include for replacing the distribution board, improving the earth bonding and introducing additional socket outlets to meet current use requirements. Such improvement works might be undertaken as part of the major extension and alteration works, unless the electrician identifies any serious fault.

### 17.02 Gas

Mains connected with the meter located in the external meter box to the flank elevation. This used to be located in the low understairs cupboard. Point to: kitchen and boiler, internal pipework unseen.

### 17.03 Water

Mains connected. The incoming water main is at the junction between the external flank wall and the external rear wall, behind the tall storage cupboard. The incoming water main would appear to be in galvanised iron. Elsewhere, modern copper plumbing is present. A combination of copper and galvanised iron is not ideal as the copper can lead to the stripping of the zinc coating, which can lead to corrosion. There is no current sign of defect noted. Consideration might be given to the renewal of the incoming water main in plastics.

As noted previously, a number of the hot and cold copper pipes serving the radiators are built into the solid floor. These do not appear to be sheathed. This is normally in the form of a PVC or bituminous paint covering. Corrosion can occur, although there is no current sign of this.

The plastic coldwater storage tank is not located onto an appropriate platform, although this is probably supported by masonry partitions beneath. The tank is provided with a proprietary lid and suitable insulation jacket. The copper water distribution pipes, within the roof space, are insulated although this is thin by modern standards. Ideally, the insulation to these should be improved.

#### 17.04 Central Heating and Hot Water

The Potterton Kingfisher CF60 wall mounted, gas fired, open flued boiler is within the kitchen. This is assumed to have a heat output of 60,000 Btu per hour. This is thought to be somewhat undersize for a property of this size. It is not known when this appliance was last serviced. You are recommended to engage a CORGI registered heating engineer to make a further assessment of this appliance.

This type of boiler requires dedicated combustion air from the outside for safe operation. To the external flank wall there is a 225 x 150 mm (9" x 6") airbrick at high level. There is a corresponding 225 x 75 mm plastic air vent at the base of the tall storage cupboard adjacent. It is assumed that the high external airbrick and the low level air vent are ducted through. You should ask the heating engineer to verify this.

The boiler provides domestic hot water to the lagged hot water cylinder located within the airing cupboard. The cylinder is not provided with an immersion heater or a thermostat. Consideration might be given to renewing this for a pre-lagged cylinder having a thermostat, alternatively a mains pressure cylinder might be installed.

The radiators are probably the original. They are all relatively thin and are probably inefficient. The pipework to the radiators would appear to be a conventional two pipe system. None of the radiators is fitted with a thermostatic radiator valve. Some of the locations are not ideal, as they are not located beneath the windows or to the external walls. It is anticipated that the central heating system, including the radiators, will be comprehensively renewed at the time of the major works.

The plastic header tank, within the roof void, provides low pressure water to the radiator system. This is not provided with an appropriate lid and the insulation jacket is poor. Some improvements might be undertaken.

#### 17.05 Drainage

The sanitary ware is quite dated and showing some signs of wear, although it would appear to be functional. The family bathroom and WC drain to an external soil and vent pipe. This passes down through the kitchen extension where it is boxed in. The ground floor WC drains directly through the floor and is assumed to be connected to the drainage system. The shower room wash hand basin is probably connected to the soil vent pipe within the kitchen. The shower drains through the wall to an external gully. The kitchen sink and appliances drain to this also. It should be noted that the kitchen sink waste pipe is cracked at low level,

externally. Ideally, this should be repaired to prevent excess water from entering into the ground soil here.

The lightweight metal inspection chamber cover within the rear terrace is beginning to corrode badly as is the frame. Ideally, these might be replaced. The clay drainage system appears to be sound. It runs partly along the rear face of the rear extension before turning at right angles, passing down between the garage and the main house, out to the front road.

The clay drainage system is mainly free running, although the first inspection chamber would benefit from some additional cleansing. The drain close to the house is relatively shallow. By the time it passes through the third inspection chamber, at the end of the drive, it has lowered in depth quite significantly.

## **18.0 GARAGE AND OUTBUILDINGS**

The detached single garage is formed of single leaf brick walls with intermediate stiffening piers. However, that to the left hand flank wall has been removed, presumably to make the garage wider. The single leaf nature of the external wall may lead to a degree of rain penetration, notably at low levels. This could not be identified, partially due to stored items. The timber roof support structure is currently presented in fair condition. There are some signs of past beetle activity, this does not appear to be active. The underside of the majority of the plain clay tile covering could not be seen due to the presence of the paper roof lining. This is in fair condition although showing more signs of wear damage than that within the main roof space. This is particularly noticeable over the side door where a degree of water penetration would appear to be occurring. Elsewhere, the tiled roof covering is in reasonable condition. One displaced tile to the right hand flank roof, close to the garage door, requires re-fitting.

The concrete floor slab is presented in reasonable condition despite some obvious signs of age wear, also probable signs of water penetration from below the garage doors. Some improvements might be required here.

The timber side door and metal Crittall window with timber sub-frame, and garage doors and frame, are all presented in fair condition with no obvious signs of decay other than some minor decay to the very bottom of the pair of garage doors. Some minor improvements might be undertaken. There is a minor degree of movement to the rear elevation, closest to the rainwater downpipe. This is probably due to a degree of minor roof thrust. Some minor improvements might be undertaken in the form of re-pointing.

The aluminium greenhouse is presented in reasonable condition although some minor signs of pitting to the aluminium frame can be seen.

The small detached timber garden shed is presented in relatively poor condition. Some felting and repairs together with re-staining should be anticipated.

## **19.0 SITE AND BOUNDARIES**

The site is a rectangular shape with a slight slope up towards the front. The boundaries are defined by a variety of mixed mature hedging, which are currently presented in reasonable condition although some future maintenance will be required. Some sections of timber fence panelling set to timber posts can also be seen. These are currently presented in reasonable condition although some repairs are required.

The front garden is mainly laid to lawn with established borders and planting. A pea-shingle driveway and hard standing is also provided, which is suitable for multiple cars. The concrete slab finish below the entrance porch, is currently presented in fair condition although some gaps and unevenness can be seen.

The rear garden is also mainly laid to lawn with established borders and planting. Many varieties of fruit trees are present, including a mature cherry tree closest to the house. This should be sufficiently far enough away to not cause risk of damage to the property. Also present, within the rear garden, is a patio formed of textured concrete slabs having a low stone effect concrete boundary wall. Many signs of gaps and unevenness can be seen to the patio. This might be re-laid to avoid the risk of tripping. The low wall is also showing significant signs of age wear.

Also within the rear garden is a series of concrete paths. These are showing mainly signs of age wear in the form of cracking and de-lamination. Some improvements might be made, notably closest to the rear extension.

It is always wise when purchasing a property to establish the ownership of boundaries and the maintenance responsibilities thereof. You should ask your legal advisers to verify this.

Signed by .....  
**P M Morton, MRICS, MCMI**  
Chartered Building Surveyor  
For AEJP Surveyors Ltd.

Date: .....