

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

- for -

REMEDIAL WORKS TO WEST FACING GABLE WALL INCLUDING REMOVAL OF CHIMNEY

- at -

THE CHASE

101 NORTH BERSTED STREET, BOGNOR REGIS

WEST SUSSEX, PO22 9AF

1.00 INTRODUCTION

This statement is prepared in support of a Listed Buildings Applications for the following works:

1. Removal of the chimney & re-instatement of roof structure with thatch roof finish.
2. Removal of 'bulging' section of stone facing to West facing gable wall & re-instatement using blockwork with lime render.
3. Underpinning works to the West facing gable wall.

2.00 HERITAGE STATEMENT/CONTEXT

The property comprises a substantial Grade II listed dwelling set in good sized grounds located on the northern outskirts of Bognor Regis. It is within the Conservation Area which includes a number of similar properties many of which are also listed & thatched. The house dates back to the late 17th century & may originally have been two cottages.

3.00 CONSULTATIONS

The owner, Mr. Cooper became aware that there was a problem with the West facing gable wall over a year ago & a meeting was held on site with Mr. Michael Rowan (Historic Building Advisor) & Martyn White (Planning Officer) on 26th January 2011. The advice given by Mr. Rowan can be summarised as follows:

1. The existing chimney is not original & as such can be removed without detriment to the listed building.
2. Whilst repairs could be carried out using brickwork & stone it would be equally acceptable to re-instate using blockwork finished with lime render.

Subsequently, Mr. Cooper has had temporary steel buttressing installed to prevent further deterioration of the fabric of the building & has employed RJCA Chartered Architects & K. E. Hilton & Associates (structural engineers) to design & instruct the necessary repairs that are the subject of this application.

4.00 AMOUNT

The extent of works proposed is limited to those deemed necessary to prevent further deterioration of the fabric of the listed building. The extent of the works is to be as described on drawing nos. 2011.50.01-04 & K. E. Hilton Associates letter (see attached Appendix 'A') to Mr. Cooper dated 9th January 2012.

5.00 LAYOUT

The layout of the property is unaffected by the works

6.00 APPEARANCE

The chimney is clearly not an original feature & has been constructed with poorly selected bricks. Its removal & the resulting re-instatement works to the roof with thatch will return this part of the building to its original design & is seen as an improvement. The thatching works will be carried out by a local thatcher whose advice will be taken to ensure that the correct materials are used to match the existing roof finishes. It is anticipated that the existing brick quoins will be retained. The use of lime render as a finish to the re-instated face work is a traditional & widely used alternative to stone. The bottom section of wall will be retained in stone with a two course band of facing brickwork separating the stone from the lime render. The overall appearance will be entirely in keeping with a property of this type & age.

7.00 SCALE

The scale of the property is unaffected by the works.

8.00 ACCESS & PARKING PROVISION

Access to the property & the parking provision are unaffected by the development.

9.00 LANDSCAPING

The existing landscaped gardens are unaffected by the proposed development. The area of driveway to the West of the property will be re-instated.

10.00 CONCLUSION

The works described in this application are essential to enable the temporary buttressing to be removed & leave this part of the listed building in a stable condition. All works will be carried out by carefully selected contractors experienced in this type of work. The outcome will preserve the listed building.

RJCA Ref: 2011/50 – January 2012

APPENDIX 'A'

K. E. HILTON & ASSOCIATES LETTER DATED 9 JANUARY 2012
& BUILDING SURVEY REPORT DATED 11 NOVEMBER 1998

K.E. HILTON & ASSOCIATES

Chartered Structural Engineers

Tel/Ans:

Tel/Fax:

Tel/Mob:

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2 Albert Chambers
Sudley Road
Bognor Regis
West Sussex
PO21 1EQ

Mr. J.R. Cooper,
"The Chase",
101 North Bersted Street,
North Bersted,
BOGNOR REGIS,
West Sussex.
PO22 9AF

9 January 2012

KEH/sep/4621

Dear Mr. Cooper,

re: **Structural Bulging Defect to West Facing Gable Wall**
- "The Chase", 101 North Bersted Street, North Bersted, Bognor Regis.

Following instructions received from your architect, Mr. R. Atkinson, of Messrs. R.J.C.A. Chartered Architects, I did, on two occasions, attend the above site and carry out an inspection and survey regarding your concern to the defect referred to above and report to you hereunder my findings, comments and recommendations.

My survey and inspections were carried out on Thursday, 24th November 2011 and Friday, 9th December 2011 and on both occasions I was accompanied by Mr. R. Atkinson and yourself. On the second visit we were also accompanied by your builder who carried out exploratory work as instructed to the bulged area and exposed the existing foundation to the gable wall.

For orientation purposes and to conform with the original survey report it is assumed that the front elevation faces due south.

On both survey occasions the weather was dry, cold and sunny and only the area referred to above was inspected and no other areas of the property were examined or are reported on hereunder.

Introduction and Property History

The property consists of a double pitched thatched roofed detached property giving domestic accommodation on ground, first and second floor attic areas.

The defective gable wall is situated to the north end of the west facing double pitched gable.

The outside face of the west gable wall is on the boundary of the property and fronts a gravel driveway which gives access to the property on the west side and properties to the rear north end of the site.

I am reliably informed that the property was originally constructed in the late 17th/early 18th century and as such has been designated a Grade II Listed building.

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K.E. HILTON, C. Eng., M.I. Struct. E., F.F.B. - Consultant

P. HAYERS - Assistant Engineer

C.R. Barrow - Assistant Engineer

Due to differing floor levels between the south facing front of the property and the rear north facing section it would appear most likely that the south front section was constructed first and shortly after the rear section was either added or formed a conversion of the outbuildings.

Before you purchased the property in early 1999 you instructed Messrs. Anderson & Associates Limited to prepare a building survey report on the property and this was subsequently carried out by their Chartered Surveyor, Mr. D.A. Russell, and reported on in his survey report dated 11th November 1998. I have read and studied this report in great detail, which was also accompanied with coloured photographic evidence of strategic areas of the property and in particular photograph no. 5 which clearly shows the west facing gable end (this report should be read in conjunction with the aforementioned survey report and drawing no. 4621/1 attached).

The bulging defect which has now occurred is in no way referred to in the aforementioned report and it can therefore be clearly established that the bulging defect has occurred since the date of this report.

I am also informed that the bulging defect which has occurred was drawn to your attention in early 2010 by your neighbours who regularly use the gravel access way to their properties at the rear. As a result you organised the erection of a temporary/permanent scaffolding to shore up and support the bulging area. At the same time you also notified your insurance company, Messrs. Cunningham & Lindsay.

First Site Inspection

The bulging area of the north end of the west facing wall was scaffolded from ground to eaves level with a scaffolding arrangement incorporating three purpose made steel fabricated 'A' frames out of 100³ RHS section. These had been fixed in position to allow timber wedging to be strategically placed between the face of the steel and the face of the bulging stone walling.

The maximum bulge appeared to be situated at approximately first floor level down to approximately 1.5M above ground level and 1.5M below eaves level. The width of the bulge was approximately 2.5M.

Further exploratory work was requested prior to a second inspection.

Second Site Inspection

The building contractor carefully removed a small area of stonework in the centre of the bulged area which revealed that the outside skin of brick and stonework had pulled away from the inside skin by approximately 170mm.

The existing foundation in the centre of the gable wall was exposed and revealed that foundations were none existent and the walling was self supporting on its own width at a shallow depth of only 150-200mm below ground level of the gravel driveway.

It is considered prudent that the temporary/permanent scaffolding was erected and this has prevented a possible collapse of the gable wall which could have resulted in disastrous and dangerous consequences to pedestrians and vehicles accessing the gravel driveway.

An internal inspection of the gable at ground floor and first floor was made and although dry lined there was no evidence of any serious movement or cracking.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The cause of the bulging defect in the gable wall is considered to be as a result of one of the following:-

1. The excessive weight of the gable end chimney above eaves level. As many

bricks as possible should be salvaged for re-use in the re-building of the external gable wall.

2. The lack of bonding between the external brick/stone walling to the inside skin.
3. Weather penetration through the porous outside skin causing thermal movement due to varying temperature differences.
4. Foundation movement of the walling due to vibration caused by vehicle access.

The following recommendations for repair and rectification work are advised:-

1. The gable end chimney should be removed in its entirety down to eaves level and the thatched roof area be reinstated to match the existing pitched roof thatch detail.
2. The temporary/permanent scaffolding arrangement should be carefully removed to allow the defective bulged area to be carefully removed saving as many bricks and stones for re-use in re-building.
3. The existing external wall foundation should be underpinned with new concrete sections not exceeding 600mm long and in staggered sections. All to Engineer's details to be provided.
4. The external skin should then be re-built and bonded back to the existing internal masonry with steel galvanised wall ties grouted into the inside skin at approximately 450mm vertical centres and 750mm horizontal centres. All to Engineer's detail to be provided.
5. It is recommended that the work referred to above is carried out by a competent building contractor who is experienced in this type of work.

It is suggested that a copy of this report be forwarded to your insurance company for their reference and consideration regarding any possible claim. In addition, copies should also be available to any building contractor tendering for the repair work.

Yours sincerely,


K.E. HILTON
C. Eng., M.I. Struct. E., F.F.B.

c.c. Richard Atkinson, Messrs. R.J.C.A., Chartered Architects,
Lime Kiln Barn, Colworth, Chichester, West Sussex. PO20 2DS

BUILDING SURVEY REPORT

ON

THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS

**The Chase
101 North Bersted Street
North Bersted
Bognor Regis
West Sussex
PO22 9AF**

FOR

Mr J R Cooper

DATED 11/11/1998

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10.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have carried out an inspection of the property known as The Chase, 101 North Bersted Street, North Bersted, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO22 9AF, in accordance with our terms and conditions of engagement previously agreed, and our findings are reported below. This report should be construed as a comment on the overall condition of the property and on the quality of its structure, not an inventory list of every single defect, some of which would not significantly affect the value of the property.

2.0 GENERAL REMARKS

We inspected the house on Tuesday, 10th November 1998. It was occupied and fully furnished, with fitted floor coverings to most rooms.

The weather at the time of our visit was dry and sunny, and for the purposes of this report, the front of the house is assumed to face south.

3.0 DESCRIPTION

The property comprises a substantial Grade II Listed house, set in good sized grounds and situated on the northern outskirts of Bognor Regis, about two miles from the town centre. It is located in the Conservation Area which includes a number of similar nearby properties, many of which are also thatched and Listed. This combination of Listing and location effectively tightly controls the extent of any alterations or additions to the subject property or its neighbours, through the offices of the Local Planning Authority.

We believe that parts of the house may date back to the late 17th Century and it is possible that it may have been two cottages at one time, perhaps incorporating a barn, in view of the high ceilings to the main reception rooms.

We last inspected the house for the current vendor just over four years ago and at that time, we were informed that the property was comprehensively refurbished by an Architect in about 1981, and much of the improvement works appear to date back to that period.

4.0 ACCOMMODATION

Ground Floor:

Side entrance into: Dining room, living room, inner hall, cloakroom/W.C, breakfast/family room, rear entrance hall, kitchen/breakfast room, study, front lobby.

First Floor:

Upper landing: bedroom 1 with en-suite shower room/W.C., bedroom 3 with airing cupboard and vanity unit, bedroom 4 with walk-in wardrobe, bathroom/W.C. Steps down to: bedroom 5 (rear). Lower landing: bedroom 2 with en-suite (internal) shower room/W.C.

Second Floor:

Stairs from the First Floor landing lead up to bedroom 6/Attic room, with walk-in cupboards.

Outside:

Small enclosed front garden and gravel driveway leading to a parking and turning area in the formal rear garden. Detached timber/felt single garage, open air swimming pool with paved surround and timber/felt pool house incorporating changing rooms and stores. There is a further lawned/paddock area beyond, with dilapidated shed and greenhouse.

5.0 TENURE

Assumed freehold with vacant possession.

6.0 STATE OF REPAIR - EXTERNAL

6.1 Chimney Stacks and Flashings

There are three chimney stacks to the property, all of brick construction, incorporating feature brick oversailing courses. The central stack above the front roof slope would appear to have been rebuilt at sometime in the past. Viewed from ground level, brickwork appears satisfactory but some cracking to the cement flashings around the two clay pots is visible, and also cracking to the cement fillets at the junction of the chimney stack with the adjoining thatched roof covering. These are prone to cracking, and lead flashings in this location are preferred and generally require less maintenance. A closer check of the condition of this stack is advised by way of maintenance, particularly in view of the dampness measured to the brickwork within the roof void below, and to the chimney breast in the walk-in wardrobe to bedroom 4. It is unlikely that a damp course was ever incorporated into this stack but it might be worth while introducing cowls to the chimney pots, to prevent falling dampness leeching through brickwork.

There is a tall stack at the east end of the property, extending up from ground level, and with a metal tie bar fixed to the roof structure through the thatched covering, providing additional support. Although this stack leans slightly westwards towards the roof slope, further significant movement appears unlikely and additional support is not considered justified. Since our last visit, extensive creeper growth in this area has been removed, down to the shoulders of the stack, and some re-pointing carried out to upper brick courses. However, mortar joints elsewhere are deteriorating and areas of brickwork to the east face now need re-pointing, also by way of maintenance.

roof void above bedroom 5, at the west end of this roof section. We are, therefore, unable to comment on the condition or adequacy of supporting timbers in this area. It would be advisable to arrange for an access door to be provided in the west wall of bedroom 6, to enable a detailed inspection of this area to be carried out.

On the south side of the roof, access is through a gap cut in the ceiling to the airing cupboard, off bedroom 3, but approached through a doorway set high in the wall of the en-suite shower room to bedroom 1. This is at the east end of the building, whilst at the other end, there is a purpose-made trap-hatch set in the ceiling of the walk-in cupboard to bedroom 4.

The visible roof structure comprises a system of original collars, purlins and rafters, though more recently, no doubt as part of the complete refurbishment, a system of struts and additional collars incorporating a large section central binder, running between the two access points, has been provided. (See Photograph 2) This has been bolted together and appears to bear on the original substantial collars, set out at regular spacings through the roof space.

In view of the high ceilings in most rooms, it is not possible to view the remainder of the timbers, including the areas around the wall plates, but suffice to say, that the structure generally appears adequate to support what is, in fact, a fairly light roof covering. It is apparent, however, that in the past, there has been significant Beetle Infestation and over the years, many timbers have been badly damaged, some to a fraction of their original section. This is particularly prevalent to roof rafters and we noted that a number had been strengthened and replaced with more modern timbers, where they have clearly become ineffective.

We are certain that a considerable amount of deterioration to timbers took place prior to any treatment, but at our last visit, we were informed that remedial treatment may have been carried out during the refurbishment in 1981, although we are not aware of the existence of any guarantees. It is difficult for us to say whether infestation has so weakened the timbers in place, to render them inadequate for their purpose. As far as we can judge, there appears to be sufficient sound wood left in place to support this covering, although not if a heavier alternative were to be considered. Nevertheless, any further Beetle attack may prejudice the integrity of the structure and we would advise you, as a precaution, to arrange for a reputable timber specialist to inspect and report on existing conditions and activity, throughout the property.

We noted that close to the westernmost access off bedroom 4, a section of purlin beneath the south slope is missing completely (Photograph 3) and may have been too badly damaged, and removed in the past. As a precaution, you may consider introducing a supplementary purlin in this area, but the practical problem is introducing timbers of sufficient length to get any significant benefit in load-bearing. It might be prudent to instruct a specialist carpenter or builder to inspect this particular

location to determine the practical possibilities here but, on balance, there is nothing to suggest that the structural integrity of the roof is at risk to make this repair vital at the current time. However, from the access hatch in the en-suite shower room at the east end, we did note that the first strut on the south side, at the end of the new binder, has lost its fixing to the rafter (Photograph 4) which is badly damaged at this point, and a repair should be effected, possibly incorporating a supplementary rafter fixed to the other side of the existing one and bolted through. We recommended this repair in our report four years ago - although there are no signs of serious problems, a repair here is nevertheless advised.

The underside of the thatching is, of course, plainly visible within the roof void and in view of the mix of some old hazel battens and more modern substantial battens, our previous comments on fitting additional thatch onto an existing coat in places, almost certainly apply. In places, the underside of the thatch, and to a greater extent, roof timbers have been charred, probably by products of combustion in the past, though at sometime in its history there may have been a fire in the south roof area. Any risk from further damage has been somewhat minimised, as only the fireplace in the living room is used, and we were informed by the vendor four years ago that this had been lined for the purpose, although this could not be checked. The current vendor has fitted a woodburning stove into the fireplace in the living room and this we understand is also regularly used. It is unlikely though that the adjoining flue serving the open fireplace in the study has ever been lined, although the hole in the chimney stack within the roof void above, previously found in our original survey, has since been blocked up.

Finally, we would advise that buildings insurance be arranged through a specialist company, where terms are likely to be more favourable than with mainstream companies, and you should check with the vendor regarding the current situation.

6.4. Parapets, Parapet Gutters and Valley Gutters

Only the east and west ends of the central valley gutter were visible from ground level but its condition and exact construction cannot be confirmed. It appears that there is a layer of bitumen or bituminous felt above the leadwork at the east end, but we cannot tell whether the rest of the valley is the same. We would, therefore, recommend that you arrange for a reputable roofing contractor to inspect this gutter, using a long ladder, and perhaps at the same time make as a precautionary check of hidden thatched areas. We have mentioned that the design of the roof frame combined with skilling ceilings in some bedrooms, prevent a detailed check of the supporting timbers, including valley boards, beneath this gutter, and we were unable to tell whether or not there are any obvious leaks at the current time. If there is a bitumen coating this will have a limited life. Also, the gutter should discharge cleanly into the hopper-head at the east end to ensure adequate operation during heavy rainfall.

6.5 Gutters, Downpipes, Gullies (where visible)

Rainwater goods are limited to the central valley gutter described above, which discharges to a cast iron hopper head and modern replacement round section PVC downpipe at the east end. At the bottom of this downpipe, debris and foliage, particularly large ferns, should be completely cleared away from the base of the wall, and we assume that the downpipe discharges to a soakaway, although this could not be confirmed.

6.6 Main Walls

The main walls, for the most part, are of solid brick and stone construction, approximately 400mm thick, with a rendered front elevation, and partly dry lined internally. The external faces of the main walls were examined from ground level, where they could be seen, and appear to be showing the usual signs of weathering consistent with the age of the property. However, surfaces are concealed in places, particularly by creeper at the west end, close to the south west corner and the northern part of the east wall, with some foliage also close to ground level. We would recommend that foliage etc be cut down to allow a detailed inspection, without which we cannot comment on the structural condition of hidden areas. Elsewhere, there is no evidence of serious cracking, subsidence or heave. The facework to stone and brick elevations has deteriorated slightly in places, though not seriously, and pointing is generally sound, with the exception of a small area below the airbrick to the west of the kitchen window on the back wall. Some minor re-pointing is also advisable to the brick arch above the family room window; to brickwork around the rear lower landing window and also just below the westernmost sash window at first floor level on the rear wall (bedroom 5).

It is clear that rendering has been removed from the west wall at sometime in the past but exposed brick and stonework appears generally satisfactory. However, there is extensive staining to stonework beneath the central valley gutter, and alongside the soil/vent pipe on the west wall, which appears to be the result of discharges from an overflow pipe, and this should be checked for operation. Also, in this area, a large shrub has been allowed to grow out of the brickwork at ground floor eaves level (Photograph 5) and should be removed. Following this, any damaged areas of wall surface should be made good.

The rendering to the front elevation was noted to be free from significant defects and on the back wall the ends of three tie bars are visible at first floor level, though the cement cappings have partly broken away. We cannot tell when these were inserted, or to where they are fixed, but there are no signs of ongoing problems in this area.

Overall, some further maintenance will inevitably be necessary in time to all brick and stone elevations, which is to be expected for a property of this age, but in general, no serious problems are apparent at the current time.

6.7 Damp-Proof Courses

In view of the age of the property, it is unlikely that a damp proof course was originally provided. It is possible that the refurbishment works incorporated some damp proofing measures, and a check should be made as to whether any guarantees exist in respect of this. Nevertheless, we carried out random moisture meter tests internally and where tests were taken, no positive readings were obtained. It is rare to eliminate dampness completely from a property of this age and indeed not necessary to do so when ground floors are of solid construction, as in this case. The usual course of action to prevent damage to internal decorations is to dry line walls internally with insulating plasterboard on treated battens. This appears to have been carried out in one or two places, but again, no defects were observed.

6.8 Sub-Floor Ventilation

There are no bricks to provide sub-floor ventilation, as ground floors are of solid construction.

6.9 Windows

Windows comprise a mix of mostly double hung sliding sash units, with some old standard softwood framed single glazed casements to the family room and bathroom, and matching replacements to the kitchen and bedroom 3. Although timbers appear generally sound, some sashes have been fixed in place, leaving only one sliding sash to each window found to be in working order. However, the opening sashes were very stiff in operation in places, particularly to bedroom 2 and in bedroom 4, where it appears to have seized up in a slightly open position. Where visible, sash cords appear satisfactory, except to the bottom sash on the rear landing window, which is badly frayed and will need to be replaced. At the same time, this lower sash which has also seized up, needs casing. We noted that the timber sill to bedroom 5 (rear) has deteriorated, but damaged timber appears to have been cut away, and remaining timbers appear sound, although unsightly. Proper repair/replacement is recommended here. The old casements to the family room have been completely painted up and may be difficult to restore to operation. The top hung casement to the main bathroom window in the west wall is a very basic, old unit and may need overhauling. This could only be viewed from a distance, although a metal angle plate repair in the past, is visible and this unit is in a poor decorative state.

Overall, a general overhaul of all windows should be carried out on redecoration, to ensure full operation.

6.10 External Joinery

External doors were found to be in working order and with timbers in a satisfactory condition, although the weatherboard at the rear entrance hall door is deteriorating and may need to be replaced on redecoration.

6.11. External Decorations

External decorations appear to have been generally maintained but will require regular attention on a three year rolling programme. However, we noted that the west gable window, to the main bathroom, (mentioned above) appears to have been missed on the last redecoration, together with the rear eyebrow window to bedroom 6, and we would advise that exposed timbers here are painted prior to complete redecoration. We would mention, at this point, that as the western boundary directly abuts the gravel driveway to a neighbouring property, your Legal Advisers should check that adequate rights of access have been secured, for maintenance purposes.

7.0 STATE OF REPAIR - INTERNAL

7.1 Ceilings

Many of the original ceilings appear to have been replaced or replastered, although old lath and plaster ceilings are present in places, visible from within the roof void, including to the upper landing where there is slightly reduced head room. In bedroom 5, the ceiling is cracked in places and sagging noticeably in one area. We have mentioned that we have been unable to inspect the roof void above, but as old plasterwork can be difficult to repair on redecoration, it is likely that complete replacement will be required imminently. The vendor informed us that an old ceiling in bedroom 2 has recently been renewed, to a reasonable standard. In our view, you will need to anticipate replacing remaining old ceilings in the short term, including the old, possibly lime-based plastering in the Attic bedroom, if this is to be in regular use. Plasterwork is marked and damaged in places and localised repairs are likely to prove unsatisfactory.

Many exposed beams to ceilings on the ground floor are a feature of the property and no significant defects are apparent.

7.2 Walls and Partitions

Internal walls are between 100mm and 225mm thick, mostly solid construction at ground floor level, with plaster and decorated surfaces. Upstairs there is a mix of solid walls and lightweight partitions, some of quite modern timber frame construction, with exposed ornamental timbers, together with plastered or papered panels. In general, the standard of finish internally is satisfactory, although some minor damage was noted to the north wall of the larder cupboard in the kitchen which should be made good, and minor tiling damage is evident in the bathroom and en-suite shower room to bedroom 1. A balustrade has been provided at the head of the main stairs which appears secure.

7.3 Fireplaces, Flues and Chimney Breasts

The western chimney stack is redundant as the two flues appeared to originally serve the fireplace in bedroom 5, now blocked up and probably an old range in the kitchen, since removed, and with the opening also blocked over. We would prefer, however, to see airbricks introduced to ventilate

redundant flues to reduce the risk of a build-up of condensation.

The central chimney stack serves the open fireplace in the study and also the woodburning stove in the living room, as previously described. We understand that the flue serving the stove has been lined in the past but this was not visible and could not be confirmed. In the western roof void, brickwork to this stack is deteriorating, where the surface of bricks is crumbling away. Although this is not considered serious at the current time, it would be worthwhile rendering over this stack as a precaution, following a precautionary check of the cement listings externally and providing cowls to minimise falling dampness.

At the east end, the flue serves a feature open fireplace in the dining room and is unlined. If a gas fire were to be fitted here, we would recommend introducing a steel liner. Advice should be obtained from a CORGI registered installer.

7.4 Floors

Our inspection of all floors was severely restricted by close fitted and well secured coverings to most rooms and we were unable to lift any boarding at first floor level, where it is evident that suspended joist construction has been used. Old butt edged boarding is visible in the airing cupboard at the west end of the building. We were informed by the owner four years ago that floors in first floor rooms at either end of the building were renewed during the refurbishment works, and it appears that the opportunity was taken to level up these floors and we found no evidence of excessive deflection in these areas. However, there may be older boarding to central areas and there is some unevenness in the main bedroom and upper landing. This is typical for a property of this age and not sufficient, in our opinion, to warrant any essential investigation. Floors in these areas are quite creaky to the tread but without lifting carpets and boarding, the condition of concealed timbers cannot be confirmed.

At ground floor level, all floors are of solid construction and we can find no evidence of significant defects or dampness and we would anticipate that damp proof membranes have been incorporated beneath the screed during earlier refurbishment works. However, floor surfaces could not be inspected, except where quarry tiles are visible.

We have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible and we are therefore unable to report that such parts of the property are free from rot, Beetle or other timber defects.

7.5 Internal Joinery

There is quite a variety of internal doors, some quite old and some matching modern replacements, generally in working order. We did note, however, that the four panel door to the main bedroom has warped slightly and one panel has split, probably the result of having been forced shut and this should

be repaired and rehung. Wardrobe doors in bedroom 1 have been replaced and there is a useful walk-in cupboard off the lower landing, although this was severely congested with belongings which prevented a full inspection. We noted, however, some damage to old plasterwork on the walls here and replastering may be required on redecoration.

Modern Shaker style kitchen units have recently been introduced and are in satisfactory condition, and the open tread staircase present at our last visit has been dismantled and removed from the kitchen, and the floor reinstated and made good.

7.6 Internal Decorations

Generally satisfactory, although we have mentioned that old plasterwork is easily damaged on redecoration. We cannot rule out the need for some replastering to damaged areas.

7.7 Dampness

We carried out random moisture meter tests internally and where tests were taken, no positive readings were obtained. See also Section 6.7 above.

7.8 Woodworm, Dry Rot and Timber Infestation

We have described in Section 6.3 above, the impact on roof timbers of extensive Beetle Infestation in the past and the need for a timber specialist firm to inspect the property as a precaution, and carry out any necessary treatment to prevent any further deterioration, which should have the benefit of a long term, preferably insurance backed guarantee.

7.9 Thermal/Acoustic Insulation

There is currently no thermal insulation whatsoever to the floor of the roof voids and a layer approximately 200mm (8") thick should now be introduced to conform to current recommendations and prevent excessive heat loss from rooms below. Electric cables should be kept clear above the insulation material which should also not pass beneath water storage tanks. At the same time, proper insulation should be introduced to both cold water storage tanks and the old central heating header tank at the east end, together with associated pipework.

8.0 SERVICES

None of the services have in any way been tested by us and any comments upon these within the report are purely as a result of a visual inspection only. Should you require specific advice on any of the services, you are recommended to seek reports from specialist contractors.

8.1 Electricity

Mains electricity is connected with the meter situated in an external meter box, and the fuse box is

situated in the larder cupboard in the kitchen. In addition, switches for the supply to the pool house are housed in a cupboard in the family room. The system is in PVC and we were informed four years ago that the complete installation was rewired in 1981. However, we cannot say whether it complies in every respect with current regulations, the standards of which are regularly tightened. In particular, we noted a lack of Residual Current Circuit Breakers and cross-bonding to pipework, and as a precaution it would be advisable for you to arrange for the installation to be tested by an NICEIC registered electrician or electrical engineer, which should also be carried out every five years.

8.2 Gas

Mains gas is connected with the meter situated in an external meter box. No tests were carried out, but all appliances should be tested by your Local Gas Authority (prior to commitment to purchase) and checked thereafter under a regular maintenance contract.

8.3 Water, Plumbing and Sanitary Fittings

Mains water is connected and the cold water supply appears to enter the property at the east end with the stopcock near to the front door in the dining room, though there is a secondary stopcock in the corner kitchen cupboard. Mains water is connected with visible internal distribution pipes formed in conventional copper tubing, though the condition and material of the incoming service main could not be checked and, if original, may be suspect.

Sanitaryware is fairly modern in the main bathroom and en-suite shower room to bedroom 2, with fittings in working order but the suite to the en-suite shower room to bedroom 1 is rather dated by today's standards with the shower tray quite stained. We were informed by the vendor that the electric showers in the bathroom and bedroom 2 en-suite have recently been installed but neither were tested. We would though recommend introducing forced ventilation in both rooms to reduce the risk of a build-up of condensation, particularly when the shower is in operation. This is considered essential in the bedroom 2 en-suite, as this is an internal room and there is no natural ventilation. However, this may prove rather awkward, given the location of this room and also the need for Listed Building Consent for any alterations to external elevations.

8.4 Hot Water and Central Heating

Domestic hot water is heated by the Potterton Netaheat gas fired central heating boiler situated in a recess off the rear entrance hall, complete with balanced flue, and we understand that the hot water and central heating are divided into two circuits and controls are located nearby. There is an airing cupboard on the short landing between bedrooms 4 and 5 at the west end of the property, with a lagged copper hot water cylinder complete with immersion heater as a back up, and with a PVC cold water storage tank above. A second airing cupboard is set high up in the wall of bedroom 3 with a rather poorly lagged copper Fortic combined hot and cold water tank and adjoining PVC storage tank. In addition, there is a small, old asbestos cement header tank in the roof void above. Although this

material does not present a significant hazard in this location if left undisturbed, consideration should be given to replacing this in PVC when any upgrading works are being carried out. At that time, it will prove necessary to arrange for specialist contractors to dispose of this material.

8.5 Drainage

We were informed by the vendor that the property is connected to mains drainage but this should be checked by your Legal Advisers. Four inspection chambers were located within the curtilage, two just beneath the surface of the gravel driveway and two more set in the rear patio. No test of the underground drainage system has been carried out but all covers were lifted and frames and covers are corroding noticeably. Indeed, the cover to the westernmost chamber is damaged and should be immediately replaced. Also, cracked and damaged rendering within this chamber should be repaired to reduce the risk of blockages. This section of drain run between the kitchen gully and the second chamber has only a very shallow fall and should be kept regularly cleaned out to ensure proper drainage, and we would mention that ideally an additional chamber should be provided above the right angle bend in the drain run to the north of the first chamber, as at the moment, this bend is concealed and hampers full access.

We feel sure that the PVC soil/vent pipe on the west wall serving the main bathroom discharges to a manhole set in the driveway of the neighbouring property but this could not be checked. The underground drain certainly does not connect to the first chamber in the patio at the rear but responsibility for shared drain runs should be checked by your Legal Adviser.

9.0 MISCELLANEOUS

9.1 Garage and Outbuildings

The single garage, situated in the back garden is of timber and felt construction and is a very basic structure only. The felt roof covering could not be inspected as it is completely covered by creeper growth which also covers part of the east wall and the whole of the back wall. Foliage should be completely cut away to enable any inspection of the covering to be carried out, but in view of the extensive damp staining to supporting timbers internally, you should now budget for complete re-covering immediately. When works are effected, supporting timbers should be checked in detail and allowed to dry out fully prior to re-covering to reduce the risk of an outbreak of dry rot. Overall, this structure will need a much higher than average amount of maintenance than a brick and tile garage and will have a limited life.

The pool house appears to have been generally maintained in recent years and at the time of our visit, there were no signs of leaks through the felt roof covering. However, felt can only be regarded as a temporary form of covering with a limited life and requiring regular maintenance and renewal. We noted that the material is beginning to crack along the front edge above the patio doors, but much of the

roof area and the whole of the east wall where it forms a boundary of the property is again covered in creeper/foliage which should be cleared away to enable a closer inspection and any future maintenance. Internally, pine panelled walls and plasterboard ceilings have been provided and there are solid floors throughout. The west part of this building has a pool filtration system and we understand that this, and the heat exchanger outside, together with the rest of the pool apparatus have been included in the sale but this has not been confirmed and has not been tested. There is an additional door set in the west wall of the pool house but this is in poor condition, affected by wet rot and should be replaced. Also, Woodboring Beetle Infestation to roof timbers should be treated but we consider this can be carried out without specialist advice.

The timber shed and dilapidated aluminium greenhouse have not been inspected.

9.2 The Site

We have not carried out any excavations to determine the subsoil conditions, nor the type and quality of the foundations, but the geological map for the area indicates the underlying ground to be of Brickearth. We are not aware of this presenting significant ground movements locally but it must be remembered that a property of this age does not have a substantial concrete foundation as we know them today but at best, a shallow brick footing. Nevertheless, as referred to above, there is no significant evidence of settlement of existing footings.

The property stands on a generally rectangular, mainly level plot, with a long informal garden area to the rear of the property. At the front, the boundaries are defined by a brick, flint and stone wall, partly concealed beneath vegetation, together with a good shrub screen. Whilst generally secure, mortar joints are in need of re-pointing in places by way of maintenance, and spalled brickwork where frost action has eroded the face of the bricks will continue to deteriorate. There is a flagstone pathway to an entrance door on the south elevation and though we would not expect surfaces to be entirely level, a number of flags are quite uneven in places and ideally should be relaid if this pathway is to be in regular use.

The gravel driveway is generally satisfactory and there are double opening gates, although wet rot was noted in places and maintenance is needed. There is a paved patio immediately behind the house, generally serviceable, though uneven and in need of re-pointing in places. The immediate rear garden is reasonably well defined, mainly by shrubs and hedges though on the west side there is a long brick and flint wall, mostly obscured. This appears to be leaning quite noticeably but fairly substantial buttressing has been introduced within the curtilage of "The Chase" and no further significant repairs are considered necessary.

The swimming pool is set against the east boundary in a raised section, with paved surround. We noted one or two slightly uneven slabs and again, re-pointing to joints is necessary in places. There is some

damaged brickwork at the north end adjoining the steps up from the lawn and some minor re-pointing also needed to a low brick wall on the north side of these steps. In front of the pool house, is a brick paved area but here, spalled and damaged bricks need replacing and will continue to weather. The pool itself has not been inspected but we were informed by the vendor that it is to be relined at her expense and this should be verified by your Legal Advisers. There is a brick screen wall separating the formal area of garden to the land beyond but the brickwork here is concealed beneath creeper growth. In the informal garden area, there is no fencing on the west side and there is some gapping in the tree and shrub screen, separating the garden from the gravel track belonging to an adjoining owner. We have mentioned the need to check rights of access along the west boundary for maintenance purposes. More importantly though, a section of flint walling abutting this track, just beyond the formal garden area, is cracked and leaning dangerously and will need to be demolished as a matter of urgency. (Photograph 6).

Along the eastern boundary to the informal garden area, old panel fencing is very dilapidated in places and again the maintenance responsibilities should be investigated.

10.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It would be fair to say the property is in a generally sound condition for its age and type, due in no small part to the extensive refurbishment apparently carried out some 17 or 18 years ago, to create the accommodation now present. The current vendor has also carried out some internal alterations including removing the secondary staircase once located in the kitchen and removing units in the utility room to create a proper entrance hall at the rear.

Though there are a number of items of general maintenance covered in detail in the body of our report, your attention is drawn mainly to the risk of further infestation within the roof void and we have recommended as a precaution that you instruct a reputable timber specialist to inspect and report, so that the overall integrity of the structure is not jeopardised in the future.

We have commented on the possible life span of the thatched covering and the deterioration that has taken place over the past four years or so and advice on current maintenance should be obtained from a Master Thatcher prior to exchange of contracts including a precautionary check of the hidden valley gutter. Although some repairs to windows have taken place, they are still in need of a general overhaul to ensure full operation. A section of flint walling in the informal garden area on the west side is leaning dangerously and should be demolished, and the felt roof to the garage needs replacing. Internally, old remaining ceilings, particularly in bedroom 5 will have a limited life. Some maintenance is needed to the inspection chamber at the head of the drain run, and to brickwork to the chimney stacks, whilst foliage should be cut away from external walls.

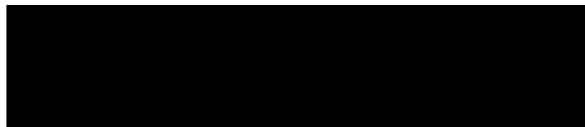
The above items are not exhaustive and should not be considered in isolation to the main detail of the

report.

Where we have recommended further investigations or reports from specialists in this report, you are advised to obtain these together with estimates for the necessary work, prior to commitment to purchase.

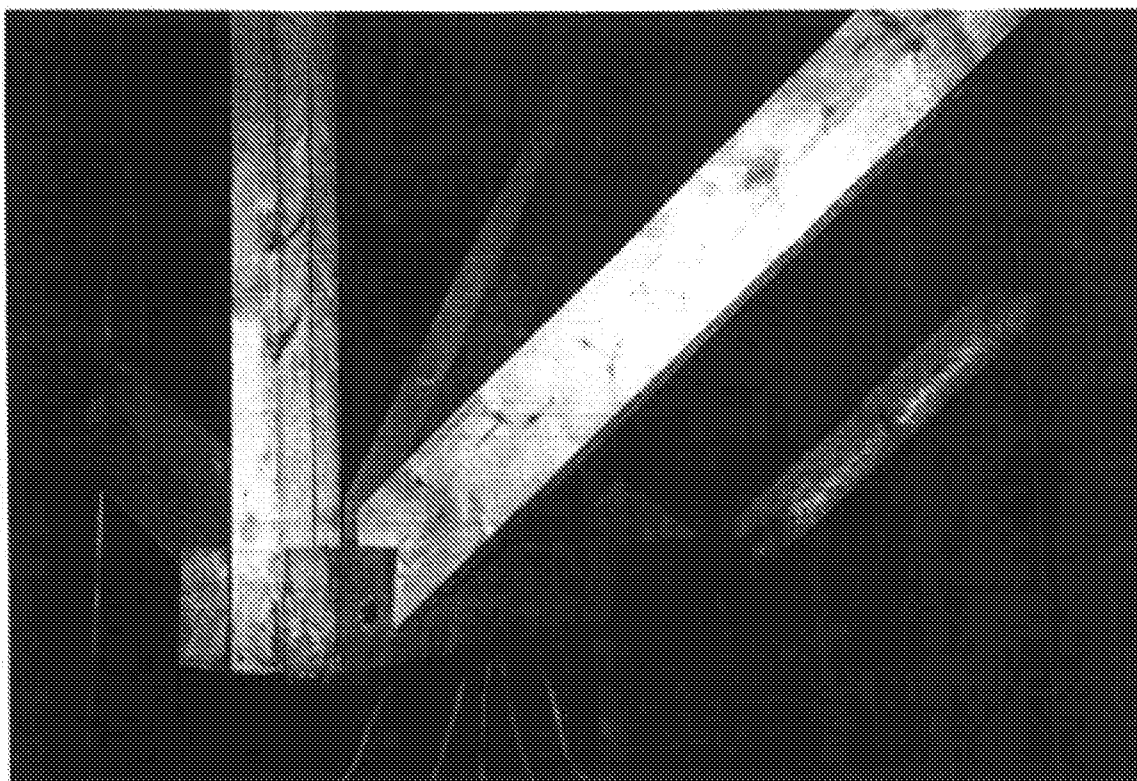
In the various foregoing pages of this report we have mentioned the various items of repair that are considered necessary and advise that prior to purchase you obtain estimates from local building contractors for the works, as required.

This report is provided for the sole use of the named clients and is confidential to them and their professional advisers. No responsibility is accepted to others.



D A Russell BSc FRICS

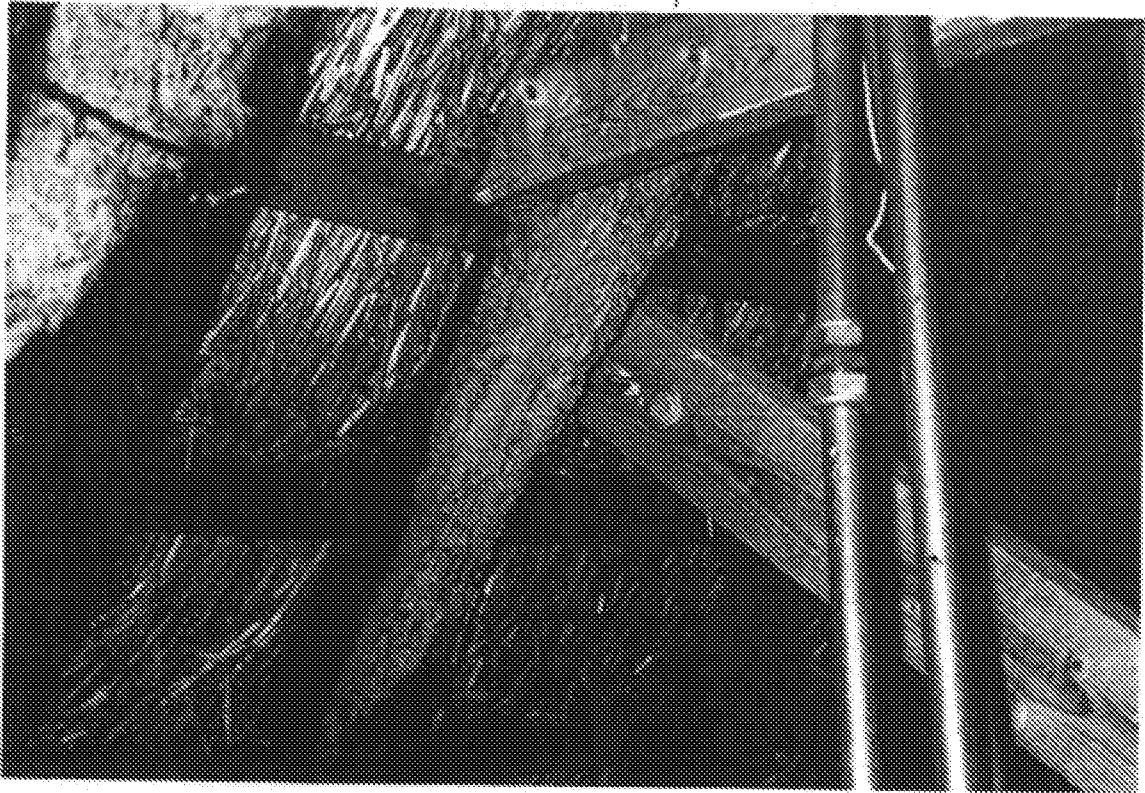
Signed for and on behalf of Anderson & Associates Ltd



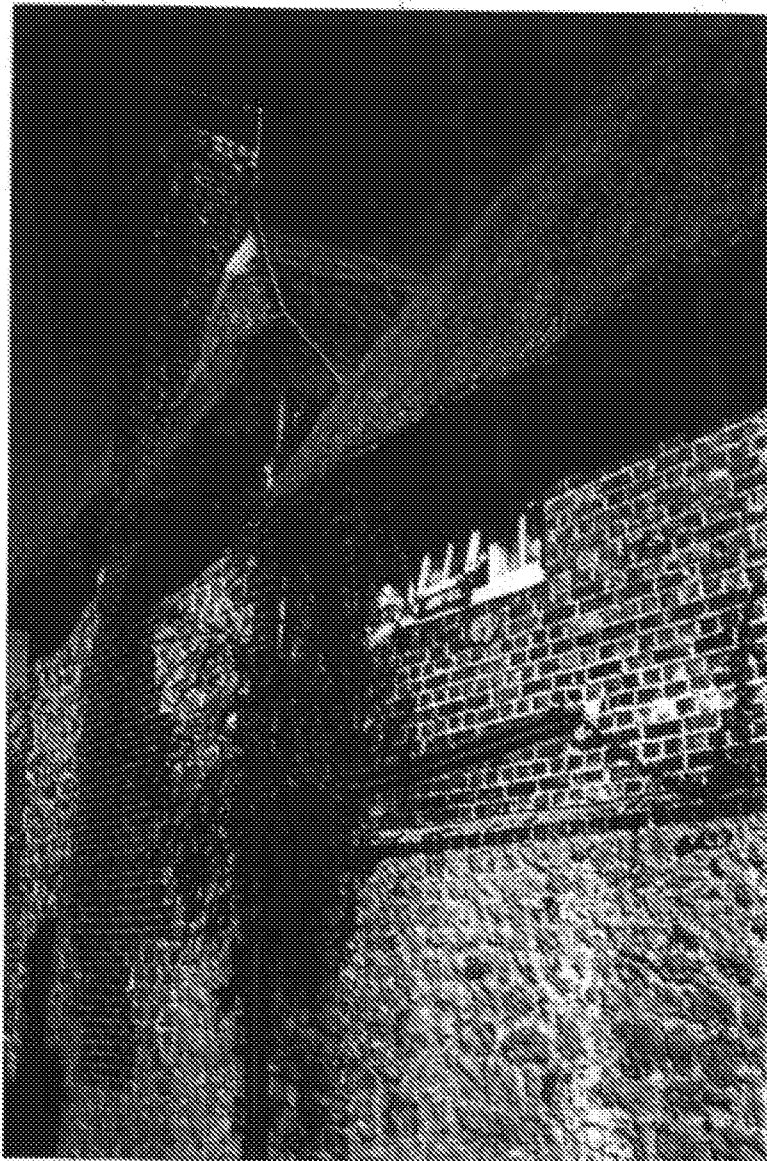
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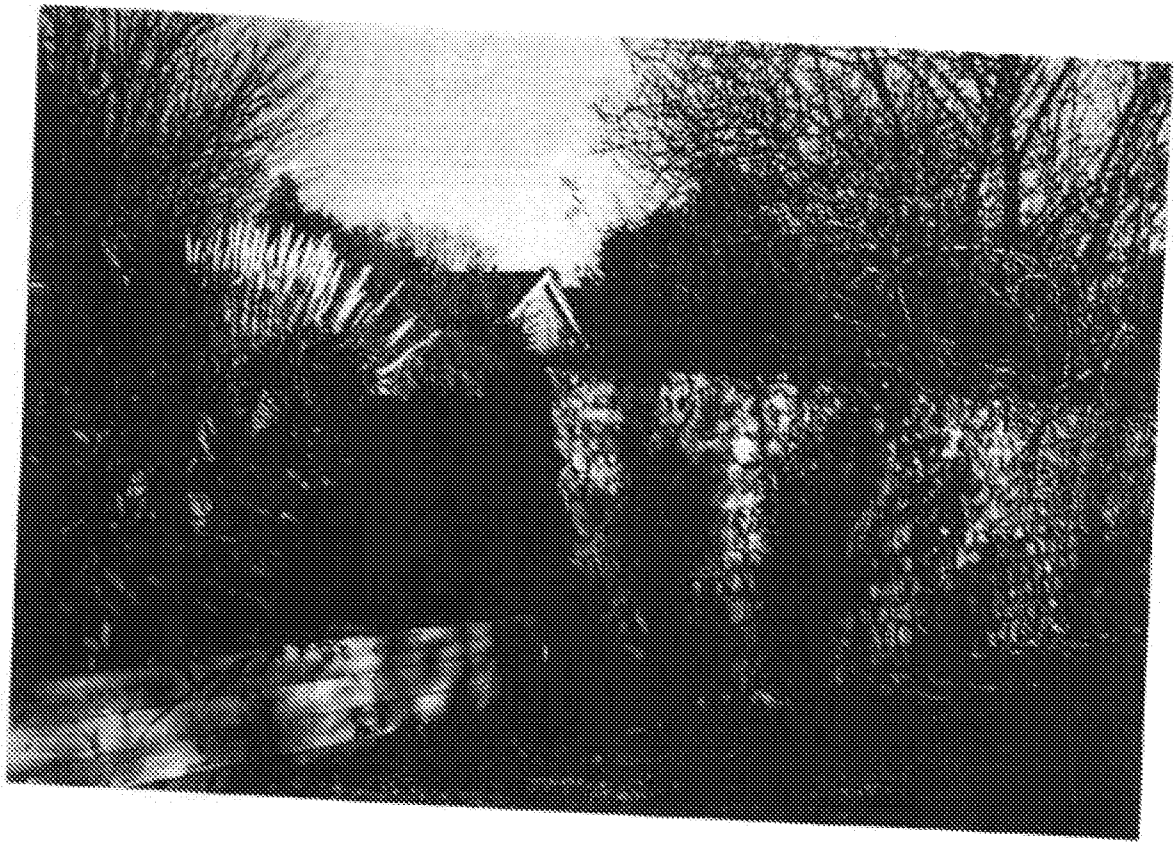
PHOTOGRAPH 3



PHOTOGRAPH 4



PHOTOGRAPH 5

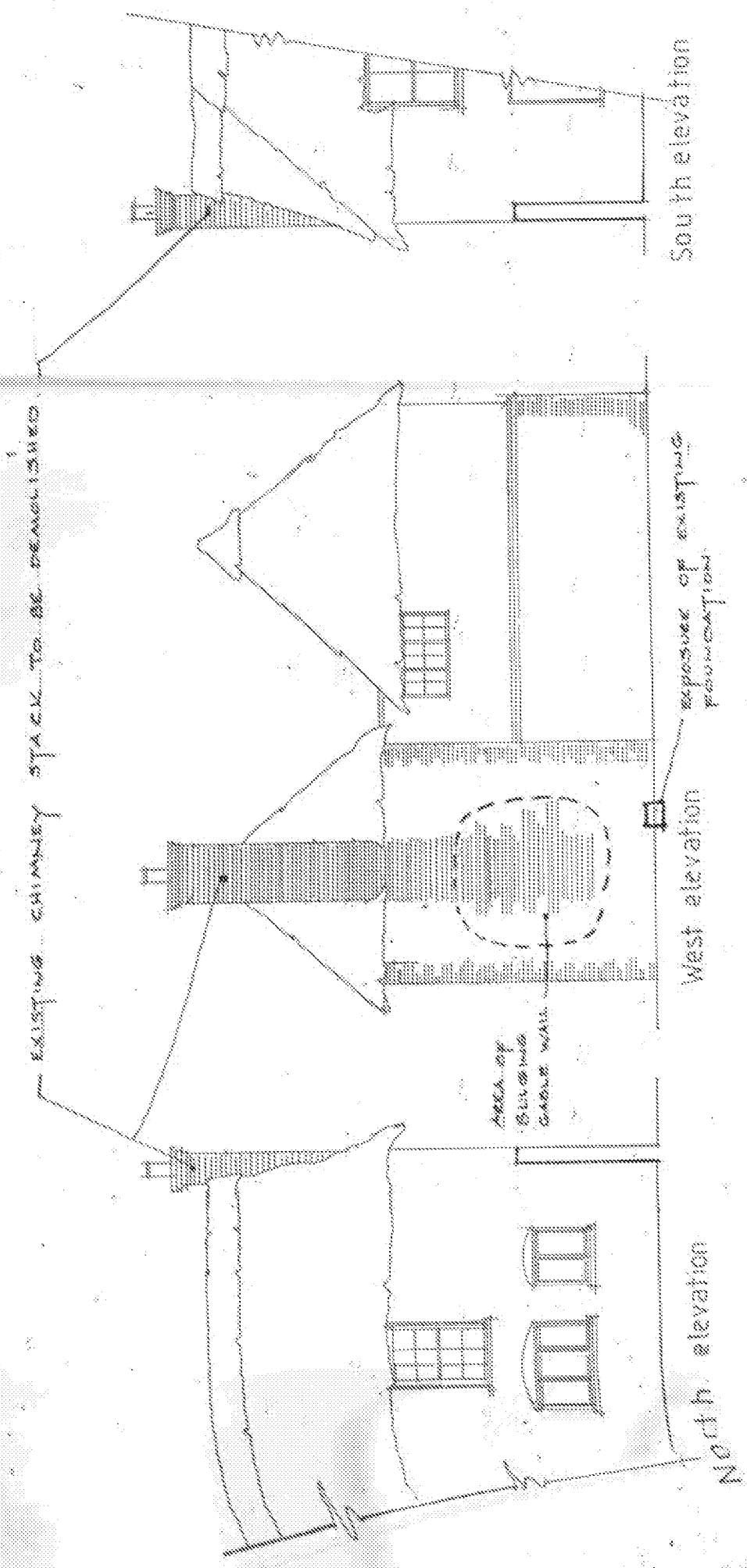


PHOTOGRAPH 6

NOTES:

1. Do not scale this drawing. Use figured dimensions only.
2. All dimensions must be checked on site by the contractor prior to commencement of work.
3. All construction details are indicative and are to be checked and confirmed on site and any divergences are to be agreed with the Contract Administrator.

THIS DRAWING TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE BUILDING CONTROL AND CONSTRUCTION NOTES



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		ELEVATIONS	
		Scale Date	1:100 11/06
Drawn By Checked		Date 11/06	Drawing Number 4621/1