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# **BUILDING CONDITION ASSESSMENT**

## **DWELLING HOUSE AT**

Engineer: James Lohan BEng MIEI

Client:

Date:

Our Ref:

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.01 Scope of Instructions**

We were commissioned by xxxxxxxx potential purchaser, to attend a site that contains a detached dwelling house and undertake a visual inspection. Specifically, we were asked to comment upon the following:

- Structure and state of the dwelling house.
- Boundaries

This report is for the private and confidential use of xxxxxxxxxxxx potential purchaser for whom the report is undertaken and should not be reproduced in whole or part or relied upon by third parties without the express written authority of James Lohan Consulting Engineer Ltd.

No tests/survey were carried out on electrical, plumbing, sanitary, or heating installations.

### **1.02 Date of Inspection**

The property was inspected by James Lohan BEng MIEI on the xx<sup>th</sup> xxxxxxxxxx.

### **1.03 Weather**

The weather at the time of the inspection was warm and dry.

### **1.04 Limitations of Inspection**

The contents of this report are strictly confined to comments concerning those terms outlined in the clients brief above.

The report should not be construed as a valuation or home buyers report and is not an inventory of every single defect, some of which would not significantly affect the use of the property. If the report does refer to some minor defects, this does not imply that the building is free from other

such defects. We did not expose any other part of the structure that was covered, unexposed or inaccessible and we are therefore unable to report that any such part of the property is free from defect.

We have not inspected the ground floor slab or foundations. The following is not intended to be an exhaustive list of minor defects and any purely significant structural defects apparent from a visual inspection will be addressed. Further defects may be encountered upon more extensive investigation, involving exposure of structural elements etc.

## **2.0 DESCRIPTION**

### **2.01 Orientation**

For ease of reference in the report I have assumed that the front of the property faces east.

### **2.02 Type and Age**

The property comprises a detached house which was constructed circa 1930's.

### **2.03 Accommodation**

The accommodation is as follows:

Floor Plan: Kitchen, WC, Living Room, Two Bedrooms.

Outside: Garden to front and rear with drive to front and front and small domestic shed to side.

### **2.04 Location**

On a small site of a Local Road.

### **2.05 Site and Surrounding Area**

The site is on a slight slope. The geological survey map for the area indicates that the subsoil is of a gleys and suitable for foundations. However, because of the scale of the map and localized variations I was unable to confirm that the subsoil under the property is of this type.

## **3.0 CONSTRUCTION AND CONDITION**

### **3.01 Main Roof**

The main roof is a cut timber roof and is mainly good condition structurally however there is some early signs of woodworm on some timbers and this will require treatment. There is a galvanised metal roof with a felt layer fitted and the roof looks like it has been worked on in the last 15-20 years. There is a hive in part of the attic space just adjacent the access hatch in the hall and this will need to be removed by professionals.

### **3.02 Other Roofs**

N/A

### **3.03 Chimney Stacks**

The chimneys in the house is in good order internally with no defects noted or staining noted. There is a small plaster crack in the stack externally.

### **3.04 Foundations and External Walls**

I was unable to inspect the foundations but due to age of house would doubt that they are present. External walls solid stone / mass concrete with internal plaster board and skim. They have been rendered externally and the render on the rear is boast for about half of the wall. The boast plaster should be removed and re-done.

### **3.05 Damp Proof Courses**

I would not expect there to be a functioning DPC in a house of this era, but one may be been fitted when it was re-furbished. There is some dampness on the window reveal to large bedroom.

### **3.06 Internal Walls and Partitions**

Internal walls are stud with plaster board and skim and are ok

commensurate with their age.

### **3.07 Fireplaces and Chimney Breasts**

A detailed inspection of the flue was not possible as they are not exposed internally.

### **3.08 Floors**

There is a solid floor with various finishes internally and no defects were noted in same.

### **3.09 Ceilings**

The ceilings are of timber ceiling joists with plaster board and skim and are ok commensurate with their age with little or no shrinkage cracks noted.

### **3.10 Windows, Doors**

The windows are double glazed uPVC and are ok commensurate with their age.

## **4.0 SERVICES**

### **4.01 General**

The inspection of the service installations was of a superficial nature and no tests have been arranged. These should be carried out by appropriate specialists if assurance as to the condition or capability is required.

### **4.02 Electrics**

Sockets, lighting points and other outlets are provided on circuits believed to be of PVC insulated cable and will require some works to be brought up to standard there are a lot of surface mounted cables externally.

### **4.03 Heating**

Oil central heating with boiler at rear of house. The system was in operation during my inspection but from a visual inspection I can see no problems with it. If further assurances are needed a plumber could be engaged to look at the system.



## **5.00 ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER ISSUES**

### **5.01 Thermal Insulation**

There is approx. 100mm insulation fitted to top attic and this can be topped up with an additional 200mm recommended.

### **5.02 Ventilation**

There is no provision for ventilation and home owners are opening windows to purge ventilate as required.

### **5.03 Condensation**

Condensation is a problem found, to varying degrees, in most homes. It is the result of relatively high levels of moisture in the atmosphere of the rooms forming as water droplets on cold surfaces as the temperature falls. It tends to be most severe in properties that are poorly insulated, where temperatures fluctuate and high levels of water vapour are produced. Condensation problems will vary according to living conditions. It is relatively simple to eliminate and can normally be minimized by good insulation, fairly constant heat and adequate ventilation.

### **5.04 Services**

The house appears to be connected to a well for water supply and it has its own septic tank to rear. The site area is extremely small and if the septic tank ever needed to be upgraded then the site is restricted as there is not enough space to accommodate any sort of upgraded system and additional ground would be required.

### **5.05 Boundaries**

Boundaries on ground match the Land Registry Map for the property Ref RN8265F except a portion to rear is not fenced for septic tank.

## **7.00 ENGINEERS'S OVERALL ASSESSMENT**

### **7.01 Summary of Defects**

For ease of reference I set out below a list of the main points mentioned in the report.

- No structural defects noted.
- Treat woodworm in attic and remove hive.
- Re-plaster rear wall.
- Upgrade Electrics.
- Top up attic insulation.

### **7.02 Engineers' Overall Opinion & Recommendations**

Based on visual inspection of the dwelling we comment as follows:

The dwelling itself is in a good structural condition with no signs of settlement. The items listed above should be considered by purchasers.

Signed : James Lohan BEng MIEI

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## **APPENDIX A: Limitations Applying to Our Professional service**

### **LIMITATIONS APPLICABLE TO PRE-ACQUISITION INSPECTIONS AND REPORTS**

#### **1. Concealed Parts**

If we observe evidence to suggest that concealed parts of the structure and fabric might be defective, we will advise you accordingly and make recommendations for further investigations. However, unless otherwise instructed by you, we will not open-up for inspection any permanently enclosed or concealed parts of the structure and fabric. Thus, as the inspection was visual and superficial only, no account could be taken of any work covered up or in inaccessible areas. It should be further noted that the author of this report did not supervise the construction of the above premises and no account could be taken of any structural detail or elements concealed within the premises/construction.

#### **2. Deleterious and Hazardous Materials**

We will advise you if we consider that there exists a significant possibility that deleterious or hazardous materials, as per Appendix B, exist at the property. Unless otherwise instructed, we will not undertake, or commission, inspections or laboratory tests to confirm the extent and precise nature of any deleterious and hazardous materials that might be present.

#### **3. Services Installations**

Our report on the services installations will be based on a cursory inspection only in order to include a general description. We will not test any of the installations. Unless otherwise instructed, we will not commission the inspection and testing of any installations by specialist consulting engineers. The complete electrical and mechanical system within the structure should be checked by a suitable qualified contractor to make sure they meet current standards.

A specialist inspection of the drainage system comprising hydrostatic testing and CCTV survey should be undertaken. This is recommended on all property purchases due to the risks to founding soils associated with defective drainage systems. Environmental investigation and appraisal is excluded.

#### **4. Building Occupancy**

Access to some areas could be restricted or denied. If we find that our inspection has been excessively limited, we will advise you accordingly and seek your further instructions. Our report will list any significant internal and external areas that we are unable to inspect.

#### **5. Land Contamination**

We will not make any formal enquiries or carry out investigations into the potential contamination of the site or neighbouring land. If, after our inspection, we consider that further detailed investigation is appropriate, we will inform you accordingly.

#### **6. Compliance with Legislation**

Our inspection will involve a general review of the state of compliance with statutory requirements such as the Building Regulations, Workplace Regulations, Fire Regulations and the Equal Status Act. However, compliance with these regulations often requires a more detailed study and involves the preparation of a detailed risk assessment. Such studies and risk assessments are beyond the scope of the type of inspection and report proposed.

## **7. Liability and Confidentiality**

Our building inspection report may be relied upon by the client only and is to whom we owe a duty of care. Our report must not be passed for information, or for any other purpose, to any third party without our prior written consent, which consent will not be unreasonably withheld or delayed. Such consent shall not entitle the third party to place any reliance on the report and shall not confer on any third party any benefit or right.

As set out in the Conditions of Engagement Agreement RA 9101 to which this contract relates, the liability of the consulting engineer under or in connection with this Agreement whether in contract or in tort, in negligence, for breach of statutory duty or otherwise (other than in respect of personal injury or death) shall be limited. In the absence of such an agreement, such sum shall be deemed to be €635,000 or ten times the total fee under this Agreement, whichever is lesser. The said limit shall be in respect of a single act, omission or statement, other than with regards to claims in respect to pollution or contamination where the said limit shall be an annual aggregate limit. In regard to pollution or contamination liability as determined by the aggregate or balance thereof shall be further limited to the lesser of (i) the direct costs reasonable incurred by the Client in cleaning up the site of the project or the Works as the case may be or any part thereof or (ii) the amount, if any, recoverable by the Consulting Engineer under any professional indemnity insurance policy taken out by the Consulting Engineer.

The liability of the Consulting Engineer to the Client expires after the expiration of such period of time as is stated in the Agreement from the issue of the certificate of Practical Completion to the Contractor or, where there is no such certificate, from the issue of such other record stating or indicating that the Works are substantially complete unless in the mean time the Client has made claim in writing upon the Consulting Engineer, specifying the negligent act, omission or statement said to have caused the alleged loss or damage sustained or sustainable. If no such period of time is stated elsewhere in the agreement it shall be deemed to be 6 years.

## **8. Cracks, Settlement and Subsidence**

This report is the result of a survey carried out in one visit. Monitoring of crack movement was not part of the initial brief; hence it was not possible to determine if cracks, where they exist, are live. The structure was not monitored for settlement.

## **9. Wet & Dry Rot**

The exterior of the premises, including roof coverings was inspected from ground level only. No responsibility is accepted for conclusions drawn in respect of the presence or absence of dry rot, wet rot, woodworm and or beetle infestation in timbers or any other materials in the structure. A specialist firm should be engaged to address these issues, which may well involve opening works, permission for which would have to be provided by the vendors/building owners.

## APPENDIX B: Deleterious Materials

Since the early 1980s the property and construction industry has evolved and adopted a list of materials, which, for one reason or another, have been labelled deleterious and/or hazardous to health and safety. Some of these materials only become deleterious and hazardous due to the particular circumstances of their use and are not inherently deleterious or hazardous in themselves. Materials that have been branded “deleterious” have usually been so classed because they either:

- (a) pose a direct risk to the health and safety of persons occupying or visiting a particular property (e.g. asbestos) or
- (b) can be detrimental to the structural performance of a building (e.g. High Alumina Cement in concrete) or
- (c) are generally perceived by the property investment market as undesirable features of a building, which can affect the liquidity of the property concerned (e.g. calcium silicate bricks) or, in the case of composite panels, its insurability.

Some deleterious materials might fall into more than one of the forgoing three categories above. Few of the deleterious materials given below can be detected with the naked eye alone. Sampling and testing of a component or element is required to confirm the presence, or absence of a material. As the inspection was visual and superficial only, no account could be taken of the existence of deleterious material within the structure.

At present, the list of deleterious and problematic materials comprises the following:

- Pyrite.
- Composite Cladding Panels to roofs and walls.
- Nickel Sulphide inclusions in toughened glazing.
- High Alumina Cement (HAC) when used in load-bearing concrete components and elements.
- Chloride additives when used in pre-cast or in situ cast concrete.
- Calcium Silicate Bricks or Tiles (also known as sand/lime or flint/lime bricks).
- Mundic Blocks and Mundic Concrete.
- Woodwool slabs when used as permanent shuttering to in situ cast structural concrete.
- Lead based in paint when the paint concerned could be used in locations that could result in the ingestion, inhalation or absorption of the material.
- Lead used for drinking water pipe work except when used as solder to pipe fittings.
- Sea dredged aggregates or other aggregates for use in reinforced concrete which do not comply with British Standard 882: 1992 and aggregates for use in concrete which do not comply with the provisions of British Standard Specification 8110: 1985.
- Asbestos in any raw form or asbestos based products.
- Manmade mineral fibres in materials when these fibres are loose and have a diameter of 3 microns or less and a length of between 5 and 100 microns.
- Urea Formaldehyde Foam



