BUILDING SURVEY

GRUMITT WADE
CHARTERED SURVEYORS AND
ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANTS

Property: **FLAT 2, 19 ROUNDHILL CRESCENT BRIGHTON, BN2 3FQ**

Clients: [redacted]

Inspected on: **24 March 2016**

Inspected by: **Nigel Dewdney BSc MRICS**

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RICS

The property is a converted Flat within a Roundhill Crescent townhouse, set on a sloping site, with the ground floor at the rear being considerably higher than that to the front. There is also a Basement Flat. The subject Flat is located on what would have been the ground floor and there are Flats at lower and higher levels.

Having regard to the appearance and location of the property it is likely to have been constructed circa 1850.

The property is of Grade II Listed Building status.

Orientation:

For the purposes of the survey, the property faces approximately due south.

Summary of construction:

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

The building is of traditional construction. The external walls are believed to be of rendered brickwork construction (or bungaroosh); however, properties being renovated within the street at the time of inspection would tend to indicate that the walls are of solid brickwork construction.

To the rear of the property there is an old outhouse which has been converted. This is of partly single-skin brickwork, rendered, with a flat roof over, and further comment is made with regards to this later within the report.

The majority of floors are of suspended timber construction [boards on joists]. The roof is of traditional pitched timber-frame construction weathered with Redland concrete tiles. As mentioned, the flat roof to the outbuilding is of a felt finish. Windows are mostly of timber sliding sashes.

Accommodation:

We presume you are familiar with the accommodation offered and, therefore, only provide an outline here. As a prospective purchaser, you should satisfy yourself that the accommodation provided; locality and facilities are available to fulfil your requirements.

Briefly, the accommodation is as follows:

Ground Floor: Entrance lobby leading to lounge, kitchen, bedroom to the rear, WC and bathroom. Steps rising to outbuilding which has been partially converted to a bedroom.

Outbuildings and parking:

Towards the rear of the property there is an outbuilding accessed via a set of stairs which have been enclosed. At the present time this is laid out as a bedroom.

You have asked me to look at the implications regarding this room and further comment is made later within the report.

Location and amenities:

The property is in an area that is unlikely to flood (see **THE SITE**).

The property is in an area with potentially high levels of radon gas that could affect health (see **Legal and Other Matters**).

The property is a Listed building and likely to be in a Conservation Area (see **Legal and Other Matters**).

SUMMARY AND OVERALL OPINION

If after reading and considering this Report you wish to proceed with the purchase you are advised to send a copy to your Legal Advisers as soon as possible. ✓

This property is considered to be a reasonable proposition for purchase, provided that you are prepared to accept the cost and inconvenience of dealing with the various repair and improvement works reported. These deficiencies are quite common in properties of this age and type. Provided that the necessary works are carried out to a satisfactory standard, we can see no reason why there should be any special difficulties on resale in normal market conditions. * see market conditions (p 5 of propety valuat.)

This property suffers from the disadvantage of the converted outbuilding as this would naturally want to be used as a further bedroom. This will take time and money to sort out the legalities in terms of Planning and Building Regulations which, if not carried out in the future, may deter potential purchasers (please see below).

Consideration of alterations

We have agreed to consider the feasibility of legalising the outbuilding to the rear. This building has been formed of rendered brickwork and, viewing the state of the windows (if

they are the original), it is possible that it was erected around the 1960's/70's. The single-skin brickwork is only partially to the elevations but this should not make a difference to the upgrading of Building Regulations.

There are 9 inch walls to the rear that retain earth towards the back. Given the size of the room and the roof, I would recommend firstly that you ask the Planning Authority as to the situation regarding the Planning status of this outbuilding but I believe that this has already been done. It is therefore possibly in your interest to apply for Planning and Listed Building consent, retrospectively, for the conversion of the link corridor and the outbuilding itself to make it a habitable room. A partition could easily be installed at the top of the stairs to segregate the room away from the corridor to the rear garden.

why?

To comply with Building Regulations, the existing flat roof would need to be checked and insulated further, together with the external walls, as these will need treating against penetrating dampness. Once this has been carried out it will require battening on the inside and upgrading with insulation then re-plastering, etc. This will then make the room itself some
df150mm smaller. The laminate flooring makes it difficult to determine its method of floor construction but this too may need upgrading, along with the link corridor.

Should Planning be granted, I can see no major reasons as to why Building Regulations consent could not be obtained. Upgrading and extension of the existing fire alarm would also be required for the corridor into the outbuilding itself.

RECOMMENDATIONS

If after reading and considering this Report you wish to proceed with the purchase you are advised to send a copy to your Legal Advisers as soon as possible.

The matters highlighted below are not to be considered in isolation of the body of this Report. You are advised to obtain contractors estimates for all the recommendations given below.

Further investigation

You are advised to obtain further advice and estimates of the cost of dealing with all matters referred to here, all discussed earlier in the Report, before committing yourself to purchase:

quotes needed.

- Commission a test and report on the electrical installation by a qualified contractor (e.g. NICEIC, ECA, NAPIT).
- Obtain evidence of servicing and a gas safety record from a Gas Safe engineer.

which would provide ideal conditions for timber decay to flourish. Such indicators may be defective rainwater goods, cracked brickwork or defective roof coverings and weatherings.

As stated above, the floor timbers, especially, were not seen and there were other unexposed portions. From the access which we were able to obtain (e.g. roof space) we did not see significant evidence of wood-boring beetle infestation or fungal attack (i.e. woodworm or timber decay). We would not consider the floors to be unduly at risk to decay.

Due to lack of access into the subfloors it was not possible to inspect any of the covered timberwork within the property. I am therefore unable to state that they are free from any defect.

DAMPNESS

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

Rising Dampness and damp-proof course (dpc)

Water will rise in porous materials, apparently against the force of gravity, by means of capillary action. Since most building materials are porous, water in the ground will rise up in the wall unless stopped by a damp-proof course or other barrier. A damp proof course is required by modern regulations but was not incorporated in many older buildings. It has been a long-standing requirement of regulation that the dpc be at least 150mm (6") above external ground level.

Buildings of this age were not built with dpc's and are susceptible to rising dampness. It is usual for remedial damp-proofing works to be carried out consisting of either the application of plasters or cement based renders with waterproof additives to the internal face of the walls or the use of dry lining to create a dry internal surface. Where the walls are of brick construction, it is possible to inject silicone damp proof courses in conjunction with the above works. However, it is not possible to inject silicone or other chemical damp proof course into bungaroosh walls.

An inspection was made around the base of the walls and readings were taken with an electronic conductance meter. Dampness was noted to the rear wall between the windows in the bedroom at the rear. It is not possible to detect why the walls should be suffering from dampness, where on the upper floors, unless window sills before repair, etc have allowed water to penetrate. It is difficult also to determine as to whether this is of an older nature but localised re-plastering and damp-proofing may be beneficial in this area. Due to tiling and the boxing-in of many of the walls around the property, it was difficult to take damp meter readings in these areas.

The outbuilding appears to have been clad in UPVC; this may need to be removed as part of any Planning Application. The rear door is not particularly good as it is a half-glazed SG door but there were no signs of any major rotting.

There are cast-iron balustrades/balconies to the Flat above and these were seen to be in a fairly good condition.

External decoration:

At the time external decoration is undertaken, the joinery should be tested for areas of rot or softness and joinery repairs undertaken as necessary. On properties of this age it is common for some joinery repairs to be necessary.

The opportunity should also be taken when carrying out repainting to overhaul the double-hung, sliding sash Windows, removing any excess layers of paint in order that the sashes operate freely.

Garage(s) and outbuildings:

There is an outbuilding to the rear which has been discussed within the report.

THE SITE:

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

The garden is a tier design with varying forms of construction present (i.e. concrete steps, blockwork retaining walls, brickwork retaining walls and flint boundary walls).

To the right-hand side there is no boundary fence between the two properties and it is likely that this boundary structure has been removed in the past. This may make it difficult to determine the exact boundary between the two properties.

There are tiered brickwork walls which have cracks and render cracks throughout due to trees creating minor movement.

The walls are not seen to be in a particularly good condition and the flint walls suffer from a fair amount of weathering and they will be weak, especially at times of high winds. It is therefore highly recommended that your legal adviser checks on ownership and responsibility of the wall between this property and the neighbouring property as it is likely that this wall also forms part of the outbuilding on the southern elevation which, unfortunately, could not be inspected.