

GW / PS / 14914 / 22

21 November 2022

Mr Peter Lambert  
Church House  
Stamfordham  
Newcastle Upon Tyne  
Tyne and Wear  
NE18 0PB

Dear Mr Lambert

**Structural Survey Report**

**Church House, Stamfordham, Newcastle Upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE18 0PB**

I refer to my inspection of your property at 9am on 9th November 2022.

You requested a site visit to inspect a wall within the stairwell, one that you had removed plaster from, to expose the structure. I note that the property is Grade 2 listed and You had already sought listed building consent to remove the plaster.

You explained that you wish to improve the level of natural daylight into the stairwell, by removing the wall that runs from basement level up to balustrade height on the second floor, dividing the stair flights. I understand that you propose replacing the wall with a timber balustrade with newel posts, handrail and spindles.

The stairwell comprises two flights between each level. All habitable rooms are accessed from the stairwell via wooden panelled doors. Tapping the walls within and forming the stairwell, indicated solid masonry walls and not hollow stud.

The plaster which you have removed is limited to the wall extending between first floor level and second floor balustrade, and mainly to the upper portion, facing the lower flight. Behind this plaster is a wooden stud frame, with a brick infill. The date/age of materials exposed varies, but does not appear to be original.

The bulk head/down stands to the underside of the half landings, on both levels, are such that it's unlikely the central stair wall is offering direct or primary support.

i.e. the half landing does not lap onto the spine wall, it stops at the spine walls face end (abuts it). It is possible that a side fixing exists but it is more likely that the half landing consists of joists spanning between the walls separating the bedrooms from the stairwell. Without removing ceiling plaster and/or floor boards to the half landing this is an assumption albeit based on experience.

Based on the factors identified during my inspection, it is unlikely that the central spine wall is offering any support to the first or second floor structures (half landings) within the stairwells. Without further destructive investigations we are unable to offer any assurances in this regard.

As with any building alteration, it's not until one commences with opening up, will they fully understand what alterations are required. That said however, I believe, worst case scenario, the half landings may require a point support load from any new balustrade newel post, maybe with a timber support beam. At this stage however, based on what's evident, I don't expect that to be the case.

In the circumstances, I recommend that the following course of action (high level) is followed:

1. Provide protection to carpets, joinery and finishes generally.
2. Carefully hack off plaster to stairwell spine wall from second floor level down to ground floor level.
3. Carefully dismantle brickwork infill between studs and set aside for clients' salvage/re-use.
4. Further expose half landing joists and assess.
5. Assess support/fixing arrangements between stair stringer and spine wall.
6. Refer any deviation from that anticipated to ourselves or the Conservation Officer.
7. Subject to findings, commence dismantling stud framing from second floor balustrade level  
ownwards, re-assessing structural/fixing arrangements as the work proceeds.
8. Construct any temporary/permanent supports necessary (assuming none).
9. Construct new balustrade as designed/approved by listed building officer.

I understand that you will be forwarding this onto the local authority. If you require any further information to assist then please do not hesitate to contact me.



Graeme Wakefield  
MCIOB