

Roof and high-level condition survey

Targeted roof and high-level investigation

ANONYMISED REPORT SAMPLE | LONDON N8

Source: an issued HCS report, August 2026. This copy illustrates the service and report format.

Client and other personal names, property addresses, full postcodes, job and document references, signatures, exact project dates and commercial figures have been removed. HCS business branding and general contact details are retained.

Original covers and photographic material have been omitted. The written findings and schedules retain their original page numbers. References to photographs and plates relate to images withheld from this sample. Grey marks indicate redacted information.

This is an edited sample, not a newly issued survey. Findings concern the original property and must not be applied to another property. The client has permitted publication of this anonymised copy.

HAMPSTEAD CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Roof and high-level condition survey

ANONYMISED SAMPLE | London N8

Prepared by: [REDACTED] MRICS

Hampstead Chartered Surveyors

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Inspection Date: [REDACTED]

Report Issue Date: [REDACTED]

This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with the Hampstead Chartered Surveyors Quality Assurance procedures and authorised for release.

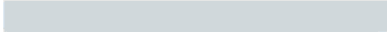
Signed:

Signature removed

For and on behalf of Hampstead Chartered Surveyors

CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION
1.1	Instruction
1.2	Limitations
1.3	Information Provided
1.4	Date of Inspection
1.5	Orientation
1.6	General Description
1.7	Tenure – Client-Provided Background
2.0	INSPECTION METHODOLOGY AND CONVENTIONS
2.1	Extent of Inspection
2.2	The Aerial Survey and Its Limitations
2.3	Areas Not Inspected
2.4	Priority Ratings
2.5	Remaining Serviceable Life
3.0	SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL FINDINGS
3.1	General
3.2	Matters Requiring Urgent Attention
3.3	Matters Requiring Attention in the Short Term
3.4	Internal Evidence
4.0	PITCHED ROOF COVERINGS
4.1	General
4.2	R1 Closet-wing roof – mortar patch repair mid-slope
4.3	R2 Closet-wing roof – non-matching earlier replacement slates
4.4	R3 Closet-wing roof – slates locally out of course and standing proud
4.5	R4 Moss, lichen and organic colonisation to slate slopes
4.6	R5 Organic debris accumulated in abutments, junctions and parapet gutters
4.7	R6 Main rear slate slope – general condition
4.8	R7 Ridge and hip tiles and their bedding – not fully inspected
5.0	FLAT ROOFS AND LEAD-COVERED ROOFS
5.1	General
5.2	F1 Flat roof / terrace covering – general condition and remaining life
5.3	F2 Rooflight upstand and decayed timber packer
5.4	F3 Localised patch repair and surface crazing to the deck
5.5	F4 Lead-covered bay roof – weathering, debris and bay widths
6.0	FLASHINGS AND WEATHERINGS
6.1	General
6.2	L1 Chimney flashings and soakers – patched and locally lifted
6.3	L2 Closet-wing abutment – raking flashing loosely dressed and lifting
6.4	L3 Redundant sheet metal cover laid over the slope
6.5	L4 Lead apron to rear window head – open junction with render
7.0	CHIMNEY STACKS
7.1	General
7.2	C1 Flashing cracked and eroded, with an open void adjacent to a pot
7.3	C2 Fracture through the oversailing course and spalled brickwork
7.4	C3 Open and eroded mortar joints to the stack generally

- 8.0 **PARAPETS AND HIGH-LEVEL MASONRY**
 - 8.1 General
 - 8.2 M1 Established vegetation growing from high-level brickwork
 - 8.3 M2 Open recess and loss of masonry at the closet-wing abutment
 - 8.4 M3 Widespread erosion of mortar joints to the flank and rear elevations
 - 8.5 M4 Open joints to the brick creasing course below the front bay gutter
 - 8.6 M5 Blown and delaminating render to the front elevation bands and window heads
 - 8.7 M6 Saturation staining to render and masonry below defective rainwater goods
 - 8.8 M7 Parapet copings – open joints and organic growth
- 9.0 **GUTTERS AND RAINWATER GOODS**
 - 9.1 General
 - 9.2 RW1 Improvised rainwater discharge into an open container at high level
 - 9.3 RW2 Truncated rainwater pipe discharging open-ended onto the wall
 - 9.4 RW3 Taped repairs to soil and waste pipe joints
 - 9.5 RW4 Waste branch and trap laid on the flat roof covering
 - 9.6 RW5 Obstructed gutter angle to the front bay, with overflow staining
 - 9.7 RW6 Gutters and downpipes generally – alignment, joints and decoration
 - 9.8 RW7 Gullies silted and partially obstructed
- 10.0 **EAVES, FASCIAS AND SOFFITS**
 - 10.1 General
 - 10.2 E1 Eaves boarding – weathered unprotected timber and open joints
 - 10.3 E2 Painted timber cornice and bargeboards – staining and decoration failure
- 11.0 **ROOF PENETRATIONS AND ANCILLARY ITEMS**
 - 11.1 General
 - 11.2 A1 Aerial masts, satellite equipment and cabling
 - 11.3 A2 Soil vent pipe, flue and extract terminals
 - 11.4 A3 Rooflights
- 12.0 **INTERNAL EVIDENCE**
 - 12.1 General
 - 12.2 I1 Living room – staining to the ceiling and cornice junction
 - 12.3 I2 Bedroom – earlier plaster repair to the wall and ceiling junction
 - 12.4 I3 Bathroom and remaining accommodation inspected
- 13.0 **FURTHER INVESTIGATION RECOMMENDED**
 - 13.1 General
 - 13.2 Before or With the First Works
 - 13.3 To Resolve the Rainwater Arrangements
 - 13.4 To Establish the Condition of the Flat Roof
 - 13.5 If Internal Staining Recurs
 - 13.6 General Matters
- 14.0 **CONCLUSION**
 - 14.1 Conclusion
- 15.0 **APPENDIX 1 – SCHEDULE OF WORKS**
- 16.0 

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Instruction

- 1.1.1 Hampstead Chartered Surveyors was instructed by [REDACTED] to carry out a targeted condition survey of the roof and high-level elements of [REDACTED], and to prepare a report recording the defects observed, their likely causes and consequences, and the remedial action we recommend.
- 1.1.2 We understand that the purpose of the inspection is in connection with the ongoing management and repair of the building, and in particular with the Client's concern as to the condition of the roof and to reported staining within her flat.
- 1.1.3 This is a targeted roof and high-level condition survey. It is not a Building Survey, a Home Survey at any RICS level, a structural appraisal or a whole-building condition report. We have not inspected, and this Report does not comment upon, the foundations, the general structure, the windows and external joinery below high level, the internal accommodation other than as recorded at Section 12.0, the below-ground drainage, or the mechanical, electrical, gas and fire installations. Where such elements are mentioned it is only insofar as they bear upon the condition of the roof and the high-level fabric.
- 1.1.4 We were asked to give particular attention to the condition of the roof coverings, the chimney stacks, the flashings and the rainwater goods; to identify any matter presenting a risk to safety or a source of water ingress; to distinguish, so far as the evidence permits, between historic and currently active water ingress within the Client's flat; and to set out our recommendations in a form which can be acted upon.

1.2 Limitations

- 1.2.1 Our Report concentrates on the condition of the roof and the high-level fabric and on any principal defects or shortcomings observed. It is not intended to be a schedule listing every item of repair, redecoration or renewal which the building will in due course require.
- 1.2.2 All findings, observations and opinions contained in this Report are based upon our own inspection of the premises. The photographs reproduced at Appendix 2, and the annotated plates within the body of this Report, are our own record, taken by us at the time of and during the course of that inspection. They are provided to illustrate and evidence the matters reported and are not themselves the source of our findings.
- 1.2.3 This Report is based on a visual inspection of the readily accessible areas of the property only and in accordance with the limitations contained in our Scope of Service provided previously. No steps were taken to expose elements of the structure otherwise concealed or to remove surface finishes for examination of underlying elements. No opening-up was undertaken, no covering was lifted or cut, no fixing was tested and no sample was taken.
- 1.2.4 Our inspection of the roof areas was undertaken from ground level, from the rear garden and side passage, from adjoining vantage points, and by means of an aerial survey of the roof slopes, the flat roof, the chimney stacks and the high-level elevations carried out by us using an unmanned aerial vehicle at the time of the inspection. This provides a considerably better view of the coverings, the stacks, the flashings and the flat roof deck than ground-level inspection alone. It does not, however, permit close physical examination of slate fixings, underlay, batten condition, the integrity of lead welts and seams, or the substrate of the flat roof covering. We did not walk the roof slopes and did not physically access the flat roof.
- 1.2.5 We did not obtain access to the upper flat and accordingly we have not inspected the flat roof terrace at close quarters. No roof void was inspected; no access hatch was identified or made available to us within the Client's flat. We are unable to comment upon the condition of the roof

structure, the underlay, the insulation or the ventilation, or upon any evidence of past or present water penetration within the void.

- 1.2.6 We were not instructed to make arrangements for specialist surveys of the drainage installations, the rainwater disposal system or the roof coverings, or for these to be tested by a specialist. We have, however, made recommendations where we believe that tests should be carried out, and made comment where something has been found from a visual inspection to be obviously defective. No water test, spray test, drainage test or thermographic survey was carried out.
- 1.2.7 Our inspection was carried out in dry weather following a settled and dry period. Rainwater penetration is frequently intermittent, and defects which manifest only during or shortly after prolonged or driving rain may not be apparent at the time of a dry weather inspection. This limitation is material to our comments on the internal evidence at Section 12.0 and should be read alongside them.
- 1.2.8 The construction of concealed elements cannot be confirmed from a visual inspection. Where we describe the likely form of a concealed element, that is an opinion formed from the age and character of the building and from what could be seen; it is not a statement of fact and should not be relied upon as such.
- 1.2.9 We are not lawyers and nothing in this Report is, or is intended to be, legal advice. Where we refer to the tenure of the building we do so only to record what we have been told. This Report has been prepared for the sole use of [REDACTED] and her professional advisers. It may not be relied upon by any other party without our prior written consent. It is a report on condition only and contains no valuation.

1.3 Information Provided

- 1.3.1 We were provided with no documentary information prior to our inspection. We have not seen any drawing, specification, guarantee, warranty or record of previous works relating to the building, nor the lease, the title or any management or service charge information.
- 1.3.2 If any such information is made available it could affect the conclusions we have reached in this Report, and we should be given the opportunity to review it.

1.4 Date of Inspection

- 1.4.1 Our inspection was undertaken on [REDACTED] at which time the weather was dry and bright, with clear skies, strong sunshine and light wind. No rain was falling and the roof surfaces were dry throughout, the preceding period having been settled and dry.
- 1.4.2 The inspection was undertaken by [REDACTED] MRICS on behalf of Hampstead Chartered Surveyors.
- 1.4.3 The photographic record accompanying this Report comprises sixty-one photographs. Annotated extracts appear as Plates 1 to 18 within the body of the Report; the full record is reproduced at Appendix 2.

1.5 Orientation

- 1.5.1 For the purposes of this Report we have assumed that the front elevation is that containing the main entrance and the projecting bay and facing [REDACTED], with front, left, right and rear referred to accordingly.

1.6 General Description

- 1.6.1 The property is a substantial late-Victorian or Edwardian villa of some three storeys over a lower ground level, forming one of a group of similar houses to this side of [REDACTED]. It has been

subdivided into flats. The Client occupies the ground-floor flat; the upper part of the building is in separate occupation.

- 1.6.2 Construction is of load-bearing solid masonry. The front elevation is faced in red brick and relieved by moulded rendered bands, rendered window heads and cills and a roughcast rendered panel beneath the eaves. The rear and flank elevations are constructed principally in London stock brick with red brick dressings, over a plinth of black-painted engineering brickwork at low level. A canted bay rises through the front elevation.
- 1.6.3 The main roofs are pitched and covered in natural slate laid to regular courses, on what is likely to be a traditional cut timber structure of purlins, rafters and battens. A dormer window is formed in the rear slope. Substantial brick chimney stacks with clay pots, including terracotta ventilating pots, rise through the roof; at least one appears to be shared with the adjoining property.
- 1.6.4 To the rear there is a two-storey closet wing with its own slated pitched roof terminating against brick parapets with copings; a lead-covered mono-pitch bay roof laid to batten rolls; and a substantial flat roof in use as a roof terrace, incorporating a large flat rooflight. A glazed conservatory or garden room stands at ground level to the rear.
- 1.6.5 Rainwater is collected in half-round gutters, cast iron to the front elevation and a mixture of cast iron and plastic elsewhere, discharging to downpipes at the flanks and rear. Cast iron and plastic soil and waste pipework is fixed externally to the rear and flank elevations. Eaves are formed with painted timber fascias, soffits and decorative bargeboards to the front and plainer boarding to the rear.

1.7 Tenure – Client-Provided Background

- 1.7.1 We are instructed that the Client owns the ground-floor flat, and we understand from her that the roof is demised to the upper flat. We record that information as client-provided background only.
- 1.7.2 We have not been provided with, and have not reviewed, the lease, the title or any other legal document relating to the property. We have not been instructed to advise upon, and this Report does not advise upon, the apportionment of repairing obligations or of the cost of any of the works described. Nothing in this Report should be read as an opinion as to which party is responsible for undertaking, or for paying for, any item recorded.
- 1.7.3 The Client should refer questions of repairing liability and cost apportionment to her solicitor, who will need to consider the lease and any relevant management arrangements. We would be pleased to advise upon those matters if separately instructed and provided with the lease.

2.0 INSPECTION METHODOLOGY AND CONVENTIONS

2.1 Extent of Inspection

2.1.1 Our inspection comprised the following:

- Visual inspection from ground level to all elevations that could be reached, using binoculars where appropriate.
- Inspection at close quarters from the rear garden, the side passage and the front approach to the lower parts of the elevations, the rainwater goods and the eaves.
- An aerial survey by unmanned aerial vehicle, flown over and around the property, providing close oblique and plan views of the main roof slopes, the closet-wing roof, the lead-covered bay roof, the flat roof and terrace, the chimney stacks and the high-level elevations.
- Inspection from within the Client's ground-floor flat of the ceilings, wall and ceiling junctions and finishes at the locations recorded at Section 12.0, together with readings taken using an electrical-resistance moisture meter.

2.1.2 No roof area was physically accessed. We did not walk any roof slope, flat roof or terrace, and no ladder was raised to any roof or gutter. All elevated observations were made from the unmanned aerial vehicle or from ground and garden level.

2.2 The Aerial Survey and Its Limitations

2.2.1 The aerial survey provides a close view of surfaces which could not otherwise be seen without scaffolding or a mobile elevating work platform, and it is well suited to identifying displaced, cracked or missing slates, defective flaunching, open mortar joints and the accumulation of debris.

2.2.2 An aerial survey is nevertheless a visual inspection made from a distance. It does not permit hand contact with the fabric. It cannot establish whether masonry, flaunching, pots, copings or flashings are loose, nor the depth of a crack, nor whether a fixing has failed. Where we identify a possible risk from potentially loose material, our recommendation is for a close hands-on inspection from a suitable access platform before the position is relied upon.

2.2.3 Flight was constrained by the proximity of the adjoining properties on both sides, by mature trees and boundary planting to the front and rear, and by overhead cables and television aerial masts at roof level. Airspace, privacy and proximity constraints prevented flight over parts of the adjoining properties, and certain areas were therefore recorded only obliquely or at a distance.

2.2.4 The geometry of the roof itself further limits what an aerial survey can record. Ridges and hips seen in plan are foreshortened; the interiors of parapet and abutment gutters, the vertical faces of upstands and the undersides of overhangs are not visible from above; and a slope screened by an adjoining higher roof or by a tree canopy cannot be recorded at all. Strong low-angle sunlight on the day of inspection produced deep shadow to the shaded slopes, valleys and abutments, and reflection from the glazed roofs. We identify in the body of this Report where a particular element could not be examined for these reasons.

2.3 Areas Not Inspected

2.3.1 The following were not visible or not accessible and are excluded from this Report:

- The interiors of gutters, valley gutters and parapet gutters, other than where their contents could be seen from above.

- The undersides of all roof coverings, and all roof timbers, underlay, insulation and ventilation provision.
- The internal faces of the chimney stacks, the flues and any flue liners.
- The internal construction of the flat roof, including the deck, insulation, vapour control layer and falls.
- Concealed and buried rainwater and soil pipework, and the below-ground drainage.
- Roof slopes, junctions and gutters concealed by adjoining buildings, boundary structures or vegetation.
- The whole of the upper flat and its roof terrace, and any roof void.

2.3.2 Where we comment upon the cause of a defect we do so only where a cause is reasonably ascertainable from what could be seen. In several instances more than one cause is possible and we say so. Where a matter cannot be resolved without further investigation, we say that also.

2.3.3 This Report reflects the condition of the property on the date of our inspection. Building fabric of this age and exposure can deteriorate quickly, particularly where water is already reaching it, and this Report should not be relied upon as a statement of condition at any materially later date.

2.4 Priority Ratings

2.4.1 Each defect recorded in this Report is given a priority rating on the following scale:

Priority	Timeframe	Definition
Priority 1	Urgent / immediate	A defect which presents a risk to health or safety, or which is admitting water into the building now. Attention should be arranged without delay.
Priority 2	Short term (0–12 months)	A defect which is causing, or will shortly cause, damage to the building fabric, and which should be remedied within the next twelve months.
Priority 3	Medium term (1–3 years)	A defect representing ongoing deterioration which should be programmed and budgeted for over the next one to three years.
Priority 4	Routine / planned maintenance	An item of routine or cyclical maintenance, or a matter for monitoring, to be dealt with as part of a planned regime.

2.4.2 Priority ratings reflect our view of technical urgency only. They take no account of the apportionment of repairing liability, of cost recovery, or of any contractual or leasehold obligation.

2.5 Remaining Serviceable Life

2.5.1 It is not possible to state the remaining serviceable life of a roof covering with precision from a visual inspection, and still less from an aerial survey in which the fabric has not been handled and the concealed construction has not been seen. Fixings, underlay, sarking and structure all bear upon the life of a covering and none of them was visible.

2.5.2 We have therefore expressed remaining life in terms which the evidence will properly support – for example that an element “appears serviceable with routine maintenance”, is “approaching the latter part of its serviceable life”, or that “renewal should be anticipated within approximately three to five years, subject to concealed condition”. These expressions should be read as informed professional judgement and not as a warranty of performance for any particular period.

3.0 SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 The roofs of [REDACTED] are, in broad terms, in a condition consistent with the age and exposure of the building. The main rear slate slope has been re-covered or substantially overhauled at some point and appears sound. There is no evidence of structural distortion, deflection or sagging to any roof plane, and no evidence of widespread or wholesale failure of any covering.
- 3.1.2 The significant problems at this property are not, in the main, problems of the roof coverings themselves. They are problems of water management. Rainwater is not being collected, conveyed and discharged in a controlled manner at several points, and the consequences of that are already visible in the masonry.

3.2 Matters Requiring Urgent Attention

- 3.2.1 Three matters require attention as a matter of urgency and are rated Priority 1:
- A rainwater downpipe at high level to the rear discharges into an open plastic container standing on loose concrete blocks on a parapet, with a length of garden hose laid into it (Defect RW1, Plates 11 and 12). This is not a rainwater disposal arrangement. It would be expected to overflow in any sustained or heavy rainfall, it places uncontrolled water immediately above and adjacent to the fabric enclosing the Client's flat, and the loose blocks at high level are themselves a safety concern.
 - A rainwater pipe in the rear passage has been cut short and terminates open-ended above the wall face, with no shoe and no connection (Defect RW2, Plate 13). Corresponding saturation staining and salt deposition are visible in the brickwork immediately below, which is consistent with this arrangement wetting the wall repeatedly.
 - Render to the moulded bands and window heads at high level on the front elevation is blown, delaminating and locally overhanging (Defect M5, Plates 8 and 9). This material is above the front approach and the pavement. We were not able to touch it and cannot confirm from a distance whether any of it is loose, but its appearance is such that a close inspection and the removal of any loose material should be arranged without delay.

3.3 Matters Requiring Attention in the Short Term

- 3.3.1 A further group of defects requires attention within the next twelve months and is rated Priority 2. These include the condition of the flaunching and the fractured oversailing course to the principal chimney stack; the loosely dressed abutment flashings and the open recess in the brickwork at the closet-wing abutment; established vegetation growing from the high-level brickwork; the patch repairs and locally displaced slates to the closet-wing roof; the obstructed gutter angle to the front bay; the taped repairs to the soil and waste pipework; and a general clearance of debris from gutters, abutments and outlets.

3.4 Internal Evidence

- 3.4.1 The Client has reported staining to the living room ceiling and cornice. Staining is present, and a previous plaster repair is evident in the adjoining bedroom. Moisture meter readings taken at each of these locations were low and consistent with dry material. On the evidence available on the day, the staining appears to be historic rather than a record of currently active ingress. That conclusion is subject to the important qualifications set out at Section 12.0, in particular that the inspection was made in dry weather and that we understand the upper flat's kitchen may lie above this area, so that a plumbing source cannot be excluded.

- 3.4.2 A schedule of works setting out every recorded defect, its location, our recommendation, its priority and an indicative timeframe is provided at Appendix 1.

4.0 PITCHED ROOF COVERINGS

4.1 General

- 4.1.1 The pitched roofs are covered in natural slate. The main rear slope and the dormer cheeks are laid to regular courses in slate of consistent size and colour, and appear to have been re-covered, or at least substantially overhauled, at some time in the recent past; the coursing is even, there is no perceptible sagging or deflection of the plane, and the surface weathering is markedly lighter than that of the adjoining property's slope, which is heavily colonised by lichen and provides a useful comparison (Plate 1).
- 4.1.2 The lower closet-wing roof to the rear is of greater age and has been repaired piecemeal. It is here, and at the abutments generally, that the defects lie.
- 4.1.3 No slate was seen to be missing from any slope. We saw no evidence of structural distortion, spread or deflection to any roof plane.

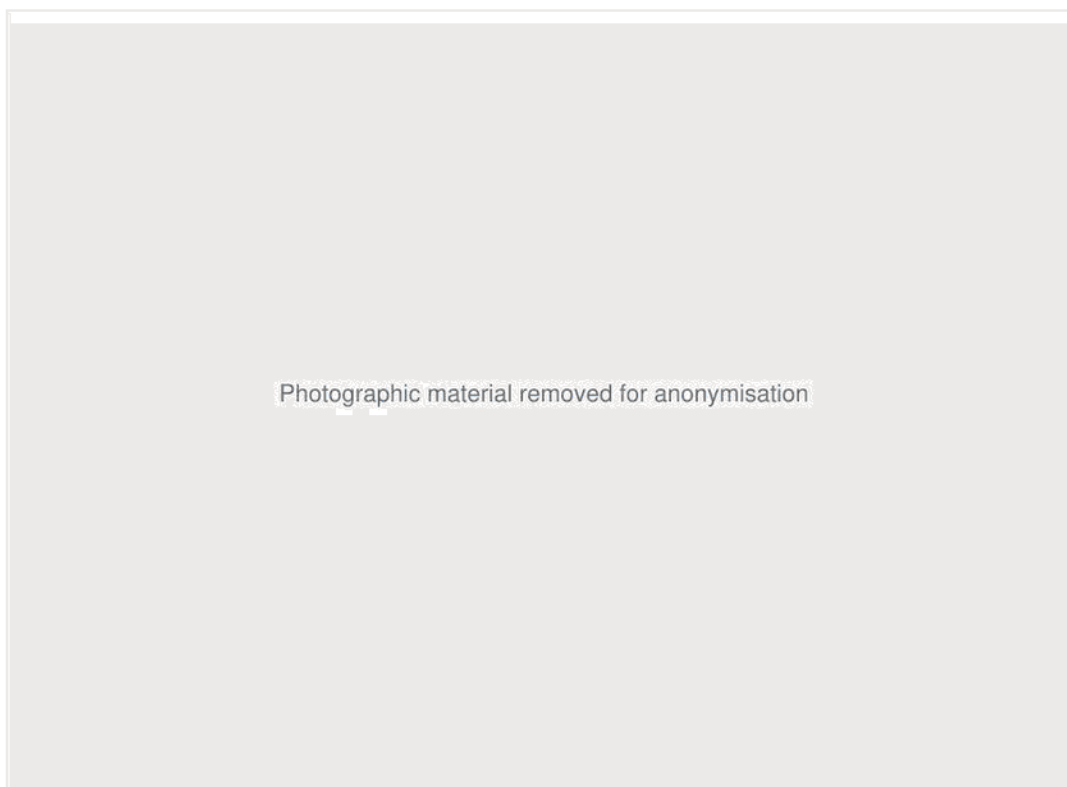


Plate 1. General view of the rear roof slopes from the aerial survey (Defects R4, R6)

- A** Main rear slope of the subject property: slate, laid to regular courses and in generally sound order.
- B** Chimney stack serving the property, apparently shared with the adjoining property – see Plates 5 and 7.
- C** Adjoining roof slope for comparison: markedly heavier weathering, lichen growth and surface loss.



Plate 2. Rear closet-wing slate roof (Defects R1, R2, R3, R5)

- A** Mortar / cement patch repair mid-slope, indicating a previous localised failure of the covering.
- B** Substantial area of non-matching replacement slates from an earlier repair.
- C** Slates locally out of course and standing proud, consistent with failed nail fixings ("nail sickness").
- D** Lead apron / abutment flashing at the head of the slope, with organic debris lodged along the junction.

4.2 R1 Closet-wing roof – mortar patch repair mid-slope

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Rear closet-wing pitched roof, upper third of the slope, approximately mid-width.
Reference	Plate 2 (A); Photographs 3, 7, 10.
Observation	A pale, irregular patch of mortar or cementitious material has been applied across the face of the slating at high level on the slope. It is plainly a repair rather than an original detail and it does not follow the coursing.
Likely cause	A mortar "fillet" or bedding patch of this kind is normally applied where a slate has cracked or slipped and a permanent repair has not been made. It is a common expedient where scaffold access is not available.
Nature of defect	Deterioration / deferred maintenance, arising from an inadequate earlier repair. There is no evidence that it is currently failing, but a mortar patch on a slate slope has a short and unreliable life.
Consequence if left	Mortar of this kind shrinks, cracks and eventually detaches. When it does so, the defective slate beneath is again exposed

and water will pass into the roof space and, in due course, to the ceiling below. Loose mortar may also wash into and block the gutter.

Recommendation	Remove the mortar patch and make a permanent repair, replacing the defective slate or slates with matching second-hand Welsh slate and re-fixing with copper or stainless steel nails or slate hooks as appropriate. This should be undertaken at the same time as the other slating repairs at item R3.
Further investigation	None beyond the close inspection that will follow when access is provided.
Remaining life	The repair itself has no meaningful remaining life and should be replaced.

4.3 R2 Closet-wing roof – non-matching earlier replacement slates

Priority	4 – Routine / planned maintenance
Location	Rear closet-wing pitched roof, left-hand third of the slope.
Reference	Plate 2 (B); Photographs 3, 7, 10.
Observation	A substantial rectangular area of the slope, of the order of a quarter of its area, has been re-slatted in slate of a different colour and surface texture to the surrounding original covering. The work is otherwise competently executed and the coursing is maintained.
Likely cause	An earlier localised re-slating, most probably following a leak or following work to the wall or flashing behind.
Nature of defect	Cosmetic only in itself. It is recorded principally because it evidences a history of localised failure to this slope, which is relevant to the assessment of remaining life.
Consequence if left	None directly. The mismatch is visible only from above and is not apparent from any normal viewpoint at ground level.
Recommendation	No action required on account of the mismatch alone. We would not recommend replacing sound slates for appearance.
Further investigation	None.
Remaining life	The replacement slates appear serviceable with routine maintenance.

4.4 R3 Closet-wing roof – slates locally out of course and standing proud

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Rear closet-wing pitched roof, central and right-hand portion of the slope, and locally at the eaves course.
Reference	Plate 2 (C); Photographs 7, 10.
Observation	A number of slates in the central and right-hand part of the slope are visibly out of alignment: the courses step and wander, and individual slates stand proud of the plane of the covering rather than lying flat. The effect is localised and does not extend across the whole slope.

Likely cause	The most probable cause is failure of the original ferrous nail fixings, commonly described as nail sickness, which allows individual slates to slip and to lift under wind. Displacement following earlier repairs, or distortion of the battens beneath, are alternative or contributory causes. The precise cause cannot be established without lifting slates.
Nature of defect	Active deterioration. Slates that have lost their fixings will continue to move and will eventually slip clear of the roof.
Consequence if left	Wind-driven rain will pass beneath lifted slates. If a slate slips clear, an open hole is left in the covering directly above the closet wing, and the displaced slate itself falls to the ground or to the conservatory roof below, which is a safety concern. Continued movement will also disturb adjoining slates.
Recommendation	Instruct a roofing contractor to overhaul the closet-wing slope from a suitable access platform: re-fix or replace all slipped, lifted and defective slates with matching second-hand slate, using slate hooks or copper nails, and re-bed as necessary. Allow for the possibility that a greater number of slates than are presently visible will be found to be loose once the slope is handled.
Further investigation	A close hands-on inspection of the whole slope should be undertaken at the time of the repair to establish how far the loss of fixings extends. If a substantial proportion of the slate is found to be nail-sick, the case for re-covering the slope as a whole should be reconsidered at that point.
Remaining life	The closet-wing covering is approaching the latter part of its serviceable life. Localised repairs are required, but wholesale renewal is not presently indicated. On the evidence available we would expect the slope to remain serviceable for some years with attentive maintenance; renewal should be planned for rather than deferred indefinitely, and the position should be reviewed once the slope has been handled.

4.5 R4 Moss, lichen and organic colonisation to slate slopes

Priority	4 – Routine / planned maintenance
Location	All slate slopes, most heavily at the laps, the lower courses and the shaded pitches; heaviest of all on the adjoining property's slope.
Reference	Plate 5 (C); Plate 1 (C); Photographs 2, 8, 11, 12.
Observation	Moss and lichen have colonised the slate slopes generally, concentrated along the head laps and the lower courses where moisture is retained longest. Growth on the subject property's main slope is light to moderate; it is markedly heavier on the adjoining slopes.
Likely cause	Normal weathering of a slate roof in a well-treed suburban setting, with part of the roof lying in shade for much of the day.
Nature of defect	Deterioration, at a slow rate. Not presently a failure.
Consequence if left	Moss holds moisture against the slate and in the laps, which accelerates the deterioration of the slate and of ferrous fixings, and reduces the effective lap in heavy rain. Dislodged moss

migrates into gutters and outlets and is a principal cause of blockage.

Recommendation	Include the careful removal of moss and organic growth in the routine maintenance regime, undertaken by hand or with a soft brush at the time of any access to the roof. High-pressure washing must not be used on slate. Chemical biocide treatment may be considered but is not necessary at present levels of growth.
Further investigation	None.
Remaining life	Not applicable; a maintenance item.

4.6 R5 Organic debris accumulated in abutments, junctions and parapet gutters

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	The abutment between the closet-wing roof and the main rear wall; the abutment gutter between the flat roof / terrace and the glazed roof below; the head of the lead-covered bay roof; and generally at roof junctions and behind parapets.
Reference	Plate 2 (D); Plate 4 (A); Plate 11 (C); Photographs 3, 6, 7, 9, 10.
Observation	Dead leaves, twigs, moss and other organic debris have accumulated along the abutments, in the parapet and abutment gutters, and at the head of the lead-covered bay roof. In places the accumulation is sufficient to have supported the growth of small plants.
Likely cause	Proximity of mature trees and boundary planting, combined with an absence of regular clearance. Debris migrating from the slate slopes contributes.
Nature of defect	Deferred maintenance, but with the capacity to cause active failure. In our experience blocked abutment and parapet gutters are among the most common causes of persistent leakage in buildings of this type.
Consequence if left	Debris obstructs the flow of water in gutters and at outlets. Water then backs up behind the obstruction, rises above the upstand of the flashing or the welt of the lead, and passes into the wall or the roof construction. Retained organic matter also holds moisture permanently against leadwork and masonry and accelerates their deterioration.
Recommendation	Arrange a thorough clearance of all abutments, parapet gutters, valleys, outlets and gutters, undertaken from a suitable access platform. Thereafter clear at least twice a year, in late autumn after leaf fall and again in spring. Consider the fitting of purpose-made leaf guards to outlets, provided that they are of a type which can themselves be cleared and which do not simply relocate the blockage.
Further investigation	The condition of the leadwork and of the gutter linings beneath the debris cannot be assessed until they have been cleared. They should be inspected at the time of clearance and we would be pleased to re-attend.
Remaining life	Not applicable; a maintenance item. The life of the leadwork beneath will be materially shortened if the debris is left in place.

4.7 R6 Main rear slate slope – general condition

Priority	4 – Routine / planned maintenance
Location	Main rear roof slope and dormer, and the visible parts of the front slope.
Reference	Plate 1 (A); Photographs 2, 7, 8, 13.
Observation	The main slope is laid in slate of consistent size and colour to even courses. No slate was seen to be missing, cracked or displaced. Surface weathering is light. So far as could be judged from the aerial photography, the plane of the roof appeared true, with no perceptible sagging, dishing or deflection at the eaves or along the line of the slope. The dormer is weathered in slate to the cheeks and appears sound.
Likely cause	Not applicable.
Nature of defect	No defect identified. Recorded for completeness and for comparison with the closet-wing roof.
Consequence if left	Not applicable.
Recommendation	No action required beyond periodic visual inspection and inclusion in the routine clearance regime. We would suggest a further high-level inspection in three to five years, or sooner if evidence of ingress emerges.
Further investigation	None, subject to the general limitation that the underside of the covering and the roof structure have not been seen.
Remaining life	The main rear slope appears serviceable with routine maintenance. On the evidence of its appearance it has been overhauled comparatively recently and we would not anticipate the need for renewal within the medium term.

4.8 R7 Ridge and hip tiles and their bedding – not fully inspected

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	Ridges and hips to the main roof slopes; the closet-wing roof terminates against parapets rather than a free ridge.
Reference	Plate 1; Plate 2; Photographs 2, 7, 8, 10, 13.
Observation	The ridge to the main rear slope was largely obscured by the adjoining tree canopy and by the angle at which the aircraft could be flown, and could not be examined. The hips visible on the rear slope appeared regular and no ridge or hip unit was seen to be missing, slipped or displaced on any slope. The bedding mortar to the ridges and hips could not be seen. The closet-wing roof runs up to parapets with copings rather than to a free ridge; the condition of that bedding is recorded at item M7, where the mortar is visibly open at several joints.
Likely cause	Not applicable; the element could not be examined.
Nature of defect	Not established. This item is recorded as a limitation on our inspection rather than as an identified defect.
Consequence if left	Ridge and hip bedding is a common source both of leakage and of falling material in a roof of this age, and its condition cannot be discounted merely because no defect was visible from the air.

HAMPSTEAD CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Roof and high-level condition survey

ANONYMISED SAMPLE | London N8

	Loose bedding admits water at the apex of the roof, where the consequences are felt across a wide area of the roof space.
Recommendation	The ridges and hips should be examined at close quarters, and the bedding tested, when access is next in place for the chimney and slating works. Any open, cracked or hollow-sounding bedding should be raked out and repointed in a suitable mortar, and any loose ridge or hip unit re-bedded. Provision should be made for this in the same tender as items C1 to C3 and R3.
Further investigation	Yes. A close hands-on inspection of the ridges and hips is required, as above. Until that is done we are unable to express a view on their condition, and the Client should not assume from this Report that they are sound.
Remaining life	Not established from a visual inspection at a distance.

5.0 FLAT ROOFS AND LEAD-COVERED ROOFS

5.1 General

5.1.1 There is a substantial flat roof to the rear of the property, at first-floor level, which is in use as a roof terrace by the upper flat. It carries a large flat rooflight and lengths of exposed waste pipework. Adjoining it, at a slightly higher level, is a mono-pitch bay roof covered in sheet lead laid to batten rolls.

5.1.2 The flat roof appears to be covered in a dark grey mineral-surfaced membrane, most probably a high-performance built-up felt or a mastic asphalt with a surface treatment. We are unable to confirm the covering type, its age, the falls designed into the deck, the position and size of the outlets, or whether the construction is a warm or cold deck, and none of these can be established from a visual inspection. The comments below are accordingly made subject to that important qualification.

5.1.3 We did not access the terrace and our observations are drawn from the aerial photography.

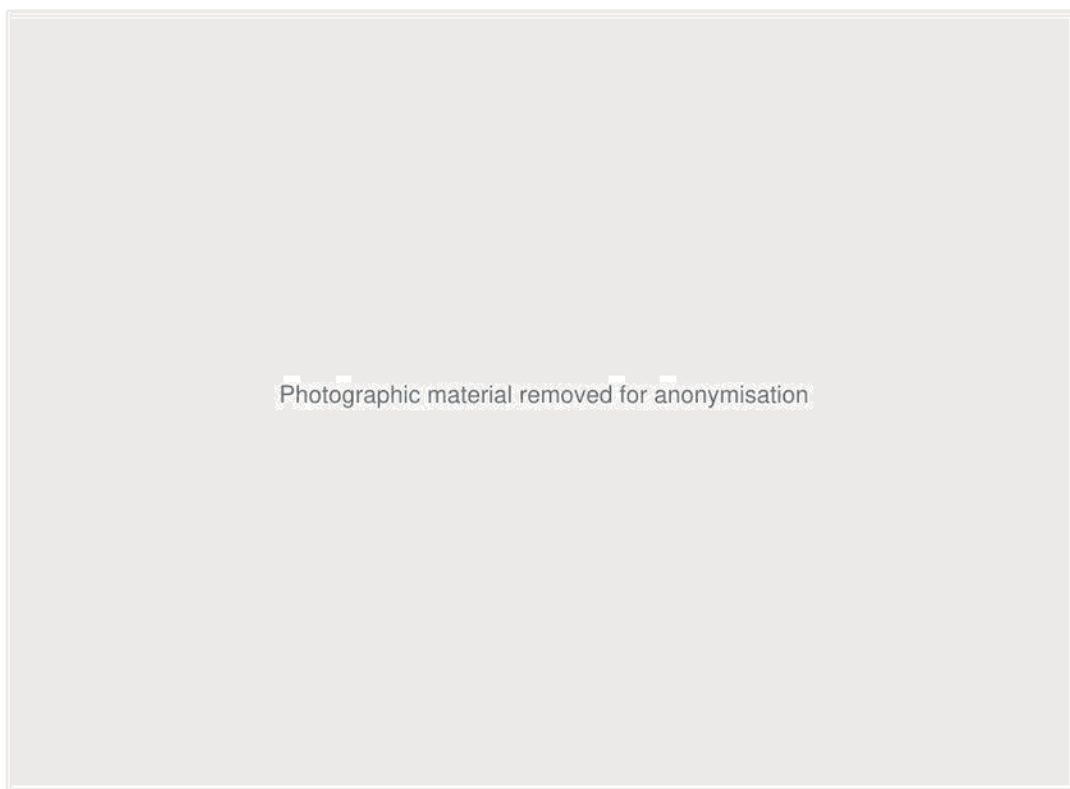


Plate 3. Flat roof / terrace and rooflight, rear (Defects F2, F3)

- A** Decayed timber packer wedged at the rooflight kerb – a temporary expedient, not a weathering detail.
- B** Rooflight upstand formed in sheet metal dressed over the kerb and reliant on sealant at the frame.
- C** Patched / made-good area of the deck surface indicating a previous localised repair.



Photographic material removed for anonymisation

Plate 4. Lead-covered bay roof, rear elevation (Defects F4, R5)

- A** Organic debris lodged along the head of the covering at the abutment with the main wall.
- B** Weathering and staining to the lead sheet; bay widths between rolls appear generous by current guidance.
- C** Vegetation encroaching directly onto the roof edge and gutter line from adjoining planting.

5.2 F1 Flat roof / terrace covering – general condition and remaining life

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	Rear flat roof and terrace at first-floor level.
Reference	Plate 3; Plate 11; Photographs 3, 4, 5, 6.
Observation	The covering is continuous and no split, tear, blister or open lap was identified from the aerial photography. The surface is uniformly weathered and the mineral finish appears to have been lost or worn in places, particularly on the trafficked routes across the deck. Falls appear shallow. Darker areas of the deck adjacent to the abutment are consistent with slow drainage or intermittent standing water, although no water was present on the day. The perimeter and abutment upstands appear to be formed by turning the covering up against the parapet and the rear wall and appear continuous, but the vertical faces of the upstands, the welts or terminations at their heads, and the position and size of the outlets are not visible from above and we are unable to comment upon them. No outlet was seen to be obstructed, but equally no outlet could be examined.
Likely cause	Normal ageing, accelerated by pedestrian traffic on a covering that does not appear to have been provided with a walkway or protection layer.

Nature of defect	Deterioration. No active failure was identified, but a covering of this appearance is not new.
Consequence if left	Flat roof coverings fail progressively and then suddenly. Loss of the surface finish exposes the membrane to ultraviolet degradation and to thermal movement, after which splitting at the upstands and at changes of level is the usual mode of failure. Any failure of this roof discharges directly into the structure over the accommodation below.
Recommendation	The covering should be brought within a planned maintenance regime: annual inspection, clearance of outlets, and prompt local repair of any defect identified. Renewal should be anticipated and planned for rather than deferred indefinitely; we express no view as to which party is responsible for that work or for its cost, and refer to Section 1.7. Where any repair is undertaken, the opportunity should be taken to establish the covering type and build-up and to inspect the upstands and outlets.
Further investigation	The type, thickness, age and build-up of the covering, and the presence and condition of insulation, vapour control and falls, cannot be confirmed without opening up. A core sample taken by a flat roofing specialist would resolve this and would allow a properly informed view of remaining life and of the appropriate specification for renewal. We recommend that this is arranged, in agreement with the parties concerned, before any decision on renewal is taken.
Remaining life	On its visual appearance the covering is approaching the latter part of its serviceable life. Renewal should be anticipated within approximately three to five years, subject to concealed condition. We emphasise that this is a judgement formed from photographs taken at a distance and it may require material revision once the roof has been walked and a core taken.

5.3 F2 Rooflight upstand and decayed timber packer

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Rooflight to the centre of the rear flat roof; the defect is at the right-hand side of the kerb as viewed in Plate 3.
Reference	Plate 3 (A, B); Photographs 4, 5.
Observation	The rooflight is set on a raised kerb which has been weathered by dressing sheet metal, apparently lead or a lead substitute, over the upstand and beneath the frame. At the right-hand side a length of timber has been wedged between the frame and the kerb. The timber is weathered, split along the grain and discoloured. It is not a designed component of the detail. The junction between the metal weathering and the rooflight frame appears to rely on sealant.
Likely cause	The wedged timber is a temporary expedient, most probably introduced to take up a gap, to pack the frame level, or to close a defect at that corner. Its presence indicates that the detail has given trouble.
Nature of defect	Active or imminent failure of the detail is a realistic prospect. The packer itself is decayed.

Consequence if left	The junction between a rooflight and its kerb is the most common point of failure on a flat roof. Water entering here passes directly into the ceiling of the room below. A sealant-dependent detail requires periodic renewal and, once it has failed, the failure is often not apparent until damage has occurred internally.
Recommendation	Remove the timber packer. Have the rooflight kerb, upstand and weathering examined at close quarters by a competent roofing contractor and the detail properly made good, with the metal weathering dressed and the frame bedded and sealed correctly. If the metal weathering is found to be split, torn or inadequately lapped, it should be renewed.
Further investigation	The condition of the kerb, of the deck around it, and of the weathering beneath the frame cannot be assessed without close inspection and limited opening-up at this junction. This should be undertaken as part of the remedial work.
Remaining life	The detail as presently formed should not be regarded as having any reliable remaining life. Once properly reformed, the weathering would be expected to remain serviceable for the life of the covering.

5.4 F3 Localised patch repair and surface crazing to the deck

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	Rear flat roof; a made-good area on the far side of the rooflight from the terrace doors, and a crazed area of the deck adjacent to the abutment.
Reference	Plate 3 (C); Plate 11 (D); Photographs 3, 5, 6.
Observation	An irregular area of the deck on the far side of the rooflight differs in texture and colour from the surrounding covering and appears to have been patched or made good. Separately, an area of the deck adjacent to the rear abutment shows fine open lines and surface crazing.
Likely cause	The patch evidences an earlier localised failure or an earlier alteration. The crazing is consistent with age-related surface degradation, exacerbated where water stands and where the covering is trafficked.
Nature of defect	Deterioration and evidence of past repair. Not a confirmed active failure, but a warning of the covering's condition.
Consequence if left	Surface crazing precedes cracking. Once a crack penetrates the membrane the roof leaks, and it will do so at the point that is most difficult to trace.
Recommendation	These areas should be examined at close quarters, and any open crack should be locally repaired using a system compatible with the existing covering. Both areas should be recorded and monitored so that any change is identified early.
Further investigation	As item F1: the covering type must be established before any repair is specified, so that an incompatible material is not applied.
Remaining life	These areas are likely to fail before the remainder of the covering.

5.5 F4 Lead-covered bay roof – weathering, debris and bay widths

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	Mono-pitch lead-covered bay roof to the rear, adjoining the flat roof.
Reference	Plate 4; Photographs 3, 9.
Observation	The roof is covered in sheet lead laid to timber batten rolls in four bays. The sheet is continuous and no split, hole or lifted welt was identified. There is general surface staining and weathering, with darker streaking on the upper bays. Organic debris is lodged along the head of the covering at the abutment with the main wall, and vegetation from the adjoining boundary overhangs the lower edge. The bays appear generous in width by reference to current guidance on lead sheet sizes.
Likely cause	Normal weathering of an exposed lead roof. The debris arises from adjoining planting and the absence of clearance. Generous bay sizing is common in work of this period, when the effects of thermal movement in lead were less well understood.
Nature of defect	Deterioration at a slow rate. No active failure identified.
Consequence if left	Lead sheet laid in over-large bays is subject to thermal fatigue, which produces creeping and eventually cracking, characteristically along the line of greatest restraint. Debris held at the head of the covering retains moisture against the lead and against the wall above, and promotes underside corrosion of the lead. Neither consequence is immediate.
Recommendation	Clear the debris from the head of the covering and cut back the encroaching vegetation, as part of the general clearance at item R5. Inspect the lead at close quarters at the same time, paying particular attention to the welts, the rolls, the head detail and the drips, and record the bay dimensions. No renewal is indicated at present.
Further investigation	The underside of the lead, the boarding beneath it and the ventilation of the void cannot be inspected without lifting the covering. We do not recommend that at this stage. A close inspection from the terrace at the time of clearance would be proportionate.
Remaining life	The lead covering appears serviceable with routine maintenance. Sheet lead of this type has a long life and, provided that debris is kept clear and that any fatigue cracking is repaired as it appears, we would not anticipate the need for renewal within the medium term.

6.0 FLASHINGS AND WEATHERINGS

6.1 General

- 6.1.1 The weathering of the junctions between roof and wall is, at this property, the element most in need of attention after the rainwater goods. Such weatherings as could be examined – at the chimney stacks, at the closet-wing abutment and at the rear window head – are, to a greater or lesser degree, either patched, loosely dressed or dependent upon an expedient. The flat roof upstands could not be seen and are not included in that observation; they are addressed at item F1 and at Section 13.0.
- 6.1.2 Leadwork cannot be assessed properly from a distance. Whether a flashing is adequately wedged into its chase, whether the laps are sufficient, and whether a welt has opened are matters that require hand contact. The comments below identify where attention is required; the specification of the repair should follow a close inspection.

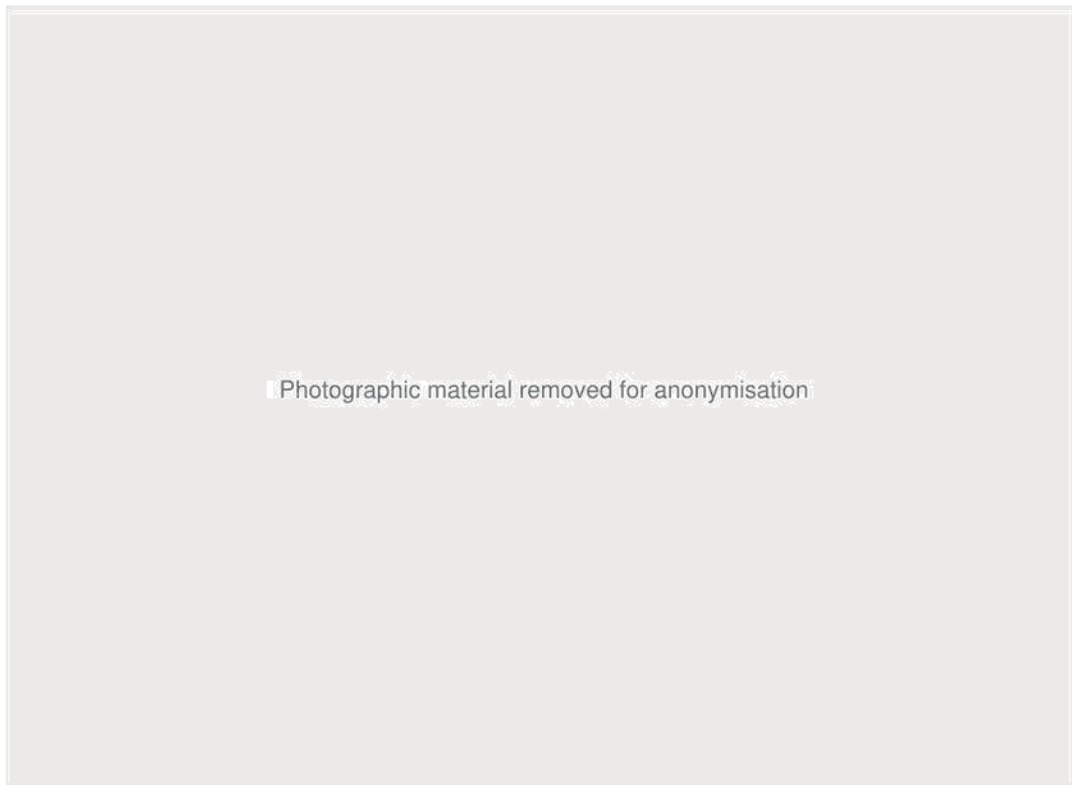


Plate 5. Stack base, abutment leadwork and slate slopes (Defects L1, L3, R4)

- A** Stepped flashing to the stack cheek; leadwork appears patched and locally lifted at the upper steps.
- B** Redundant metal cover / sheet laid over an earlier opening in the slope, not a permanent weathering.
- C** Widespread moss and lichen colonisation to slate slopes, heaviest at laps and the lower courses.

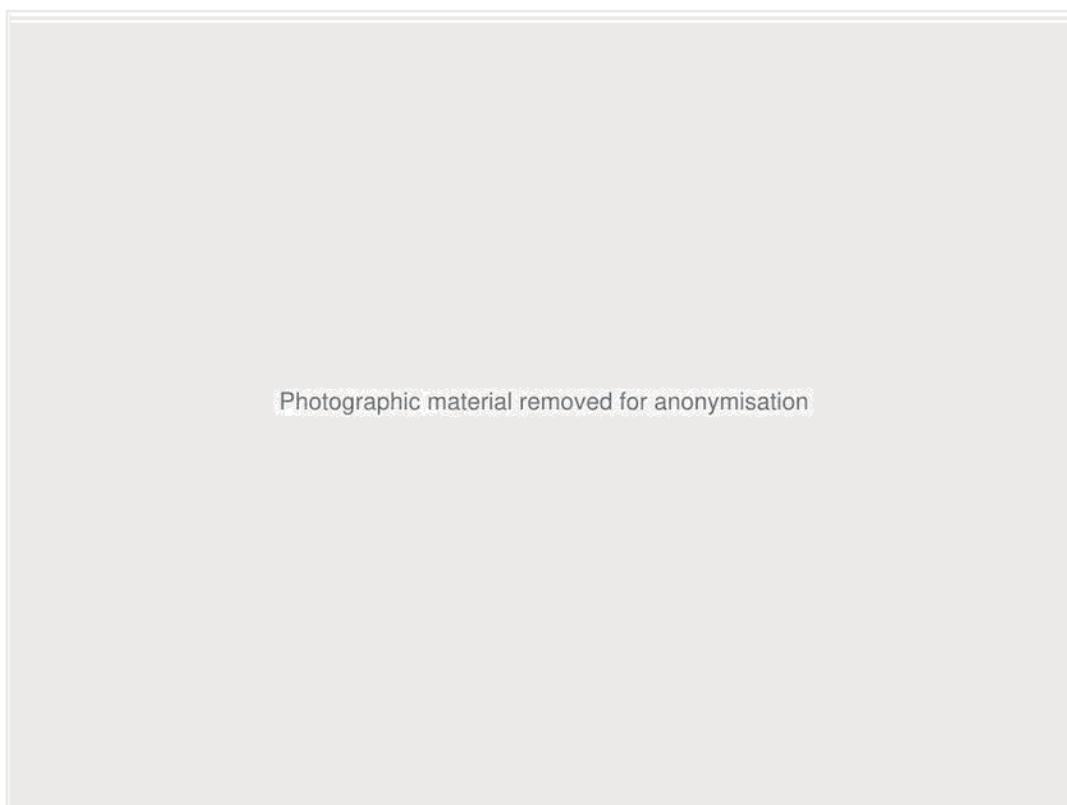


Plate 6. High-level rear elevation at the closet-wing abutment (Defects M1, M2, L2)

- A** Established self-seeded vegetation growing directly from the brickwork joints at high level.
- B** Open recess in the brickwork above the roof abutment where mortar and brick material have been lost.
- C** Raking / stepped abutment flashing loosely dressed and locally lifting from the brick chase.

6.2 L1 Chimney flashings and soakers – patched and locally lifted

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Main chimney stack to the rear slope, at the junction of the stack with the roof slopes on both cheeks and at the front and back gutters.
Reference	Plate 7; Plate 5 (A); Photographs 11, 12.
Observation	The stepped flashings to the stack cheeks are formed in sheet lead. They are of varying appearance along their length, which is consistent with patching, and at the upper steps the lead appears to stand away from the face of the brickwork rather than lying tight into the chase. Bright, unweathered lead visible at one section indicates a comparatively recent local repair. The soakers beneath the slating could not be seen.
Likely cause	Progressive repair over time, with sections replaced or re-dressed as failures have occurred, rather than renewal of the weathering as a whole. Loss of the pointing or wedging that retains lead in a chase is the usual reason for lifting.
Nature of defect	Deterioration, with a realistic prospect of active ingress at the lifted sections in driving rain.

Consequence if left	A stack is the single most common source of water ingress in a building of this type, and a lifted step flashing admits water directly into the roof construction beside the stack. The water then tracks down the stack or along the rafters and appears internally at a point which may be some distance from the defect.
Recommendation	The stack weatherings should be inspected at close quarters from a suitable access platform, at the same time as the stack repairs at items C1 to C3. Any lifted, split or inadequately lapped lead should be re-dressed or renewed, properly wedged and pointed into a raked chase. Where the stack itself is to be repointed, renewal of the flashings as a complete run should be considered, as the cost of doing so once the access is in place is modest by comparison with a repeat visit.
Further investigation	A close hands-on inspection is required. The soakers beneath the slating can only be assessed by lifting slates locally, which should be done if a leak is subsequently traced to this position.
Remaining life	The flashings are approaching the latter part of their serviceable life. Localised repairs are required now; renewal of the stack weatherings should be anticipated at the time of the next substantive stack repair.

6.3 L2 Closet-wing abutment – raking flashing loosely dressed and lifting

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Junction of the closet-wing roof with the main rear wall, at the raking abutment on the right-hand side.
Reference	Plate 6 (C); Photographs 41, 42.
Observation	The abutment is weathered by lead dressed in steps up the raking line of the roof. The lead is irregular in profile and locally stands away from the brickwork. It appears to have been dressed by hand without a properly cut chase over part of its length and to be held in position, in places, by mortar rather than by wedges.
Likely cause	An earlier repair carried out without forming a proper chase. Loss of the mortar retaining the upper edge.
Nature of defect	Active deterioration. This detail is directly associated with the masonry defect at item M2 immediately above it, and the two are likely to share a cause.
Consequence if left	Water passing behind a lifted raking flashing enters the wall and the roof construction at the abutment. Given the loss of brick and mortar immediately above (item M2), it is in our view likely that water is being admitted into the wall at this point, although we were not able to confirm that from a visual inspection carried out in dry weather. This is the location at which we would look first if a leak were reported affecting the rear of the building.
Recommendation	Rake out and form a proper chase, and re-dress or renew the raking flashing in Code 4 or Code 5 lead in lengths not exceeding 1.5 metres, properly lapped, wedged and pointed. This work should be carried out at the same time as the masonry repair at item M2, and the two must be co-ordinated – repairing one without the other will not resolve the position.

Further investigation	The extent of loss to the brickwork behind the flashing cannot be established until the lead is lifted. A modest contingency should be allowed for rebuilding.
-----------------------	--

Remaining life	The flashing as presently formed has little reliable remaining life. Renewed in accordance with good practice, lead in this position would be expected to give a long service life.
----------------	---

6.4 L3 Redundant sheet metal cover laid over the slope

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
----------	-----------------------------

Location	Adjoining slope to the rear of the main stack, at the position shown in Plate 5.
----------	--

Reference	Plate 5 (B); Photograph 12.
-----------	-----------------------------

Observation	A loose sheet of light-coloured metal has been laid over the slating adjacent to the stack, apparently covering an opening or an earlier penetration. It does not appear to be dressed, welded or fixed. A second, smaller redundant metal cover is visible further down the slope.
-------------	---

Likely cause	A temporary covering placed over a redundant penetration, most probably where a flue terminal, vent or aerial fixing has been removed.
--------------	--

Nature of defect	Deferred maintenance and a poor detail. It is a temporary measure that has become permanent.
------------------	--

Consequence if left	An unfixed sheet is liable to be displaced by wind, at which point the opening beneath is exposed and the sheet itself becomes a falling object. Water can pass beneath it in the meantime.
---------------------	---

Recommendation	Remove the loose sheet and make a permanent repair. If the penetration beneath is redundant, it should be closed by re-slatting with matching slate and, where a hole passes through the roof structure, by properly weathering and making good. If the penetration remains in use, a purpose-made lead slate should be fitted.
----------------	---

Further investigation	The nature of the opening beneath cannot be established until the sheet is lifted.
-----------------------	--

Remaining life	Not applicable; the sheet has no proper function.
----------------	---

6.5 L4 Lead apron to rear window head – open junction with render

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
----------	-----------------------------

Location	Rear elevation, over the head of the tall stair or landing window, at the junction of the lead apron with the rendered panel to the left.
----------	---

Reference	Photographs 59, 60.
-----------	---------------------

Observation	A projecting lead-covered lintel or apron weathers the head of the window. At its junction with the adjoining rendered panel the detail is untidy and there is an open line between the lead and the render. Discolouration is visible on the render immediately below.
-------------	---

HAMPSTEAD CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Roof and high-level condition survey

ANONYMISED SAMPLE | London N8

Likely cause	An imperfectly formed junction between two different materials, most probably arising when the render was applied or renewed. Sealant, if it was used, has failed or was never adequate.
Nature of defect	Deterioration. The staining below suggests water is passing at this junction, though only intermittently.
Consequence if left	Water entering behind the render at a horizontal junction of this kind will run down behind the render coat, causing it to lose adhesion and eventually to blow off in sheets. Water may also reach the window head and the internal reveal.
Recommendation	Rake out and reform the junction between the lead and the render, with the lead upstand properly turned and the render cut back and made good so that water is thrown clear. A sealant-only repair is not adequate as a permanent solution.
Further investigation	The condition of the render adjacent to the junction should be tested by tapping at the time of the repair, to establish whether it has lost adhesion over a wider area.
Remaining life	The detail requires attention now. Properly reformed it should be serviceable for the life of the render.

7.0 CHIMNEY STACKS

7.1 General

- 7.1.1 There are several brick chimney stacks serving the property. The principal stack rising through the rear slope, which appears to be shared with the adjoining property, was recorded in detail by the aerial survey and is the subject of the items below. Other stacks were seen at a distance and appeared to be in comparable, or better, condition; we have not been able to examine them closely and the items below should be read as applying to the principal stack alone. So far as could be judged from the aerial photography, no stack appeared to be leaning, twisted or out of plumb, and no bulging or distortion of the shaft was apparent. We would emphasise that verticality cannot be measured from an oblique photograph and that a plumb check should be carried out when access is next in place.
- 7.1.2 The stack carries a number of clay pots, including terracotta ventilating pots. A television aerial mast is fixed adjacent to it. No cowl or cap was seen to any pot and at least one flue appeared to be open.
- 7.1.3 We would emphasise the limitation at Section 2.2.2. We have not been able to touch this stack. We can describe what is visible, but we cannot state whether any part of it is loose. That question can only be resolved by a hands-on inspection.

Photographic material removed for anonymisation

Plate 7. Main chimney stack, rear slope (Defects C1, C2, C3)

- A** Flaunching cracked and eroded; a section is missing beside the pot leaving an open void into the stack head.
- B** Horizontal fracture through the oversailing corbel course, with spalled and eroded brick faces below.
- C** Open and eroded mortar joints to the stack generally; localised brick loss.

7.2 C1 Flaunching cracked and eroded, with an open void adjacent to a pot

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Head of the main chimney stack to the rear slope, at the base of the left-hand group of pots.
Reference	Plate 7 (A); Photographs 11, 12.
Observation	The mortar flaunching capping the stack head is heavily eroded, friable in appearance and cracked. Adjacent to one of the pots a substantial piece of the flaunching is missing altogether, leaving an open void into the head of the stack. The remaining flaunching is uneven and appears to have lost its original weathered profile, so that water is not shed clear of the brickwork.
Likely cause	Age and exposure. Flaunching is a sacrificial mortar detail with a life measured in decades and it has plainly reached the end of its life here. Frost action on saturated mortar accelerates the loss.
Nature of defect	Active failure. The stack head is open to the weather at this point.
Consequence if left	Water entering the open void saturates the brickwork of the stack from within and passes down the flue and the stack construction. In a stack of this size the volume of water involved is significant. Saturation of the stack promotes frost damage, sulphate attack on the mortar and staining and dampness where the stack passes through the roof space and the accommodation. Loss of the flaunching also removes the restraint to the pot, which may in time become loose. Fragments of detached flaunching fall onto the roof slopes and into the gutters, breaking slates and causing blockages.
Recommendation	Hack off the defective flaunching entirely and renew in a suitable mortar – we would suggest a lime-based or a weak gauged mortar rather than a strong cement mix, which is prone to shrinkage cracking – properly formed to a weathered profile with a drip clear of the brick face, and with the pots re-bedded and haunched in. This should be done at the same time as items C2, C3 and L1, so that a single access installation serves all of the stack work.
Further investigation	A close hands-on inspection is required to establish whether the pots are secure, whether any further flaunching is loose, and whether any material presents an immediate risk of falling. This should be arranged before or at the commencement of the works. If any flue remains in use, its condition and the presence or otherwise of a liner should be established by a competent person at the same time.
Remaining life	The flaunching has no remaining serviceable life and requires renewal. Renewed flaunching would be expected to give of the order of twenty to thirty years' service.

7.3 C2 Fracture through the oversailing course and spalled brickwork

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Main chimney stack to the rear slope, at the projecting oversailing / corbel course below the stack head, and in the courses immediately beneath it.

Reference	Plate 7 (B); Photographs 11, 12.
Observation	A continuous horizontal fracture runs through the projecting corbel course on the visible face of the stack, following the bed joint and passing through the brick material in places. In the courses immediately below, a number of bricks have lost their faces entirely, exposing the softer material behind, and the mortar between them is deeply eroded.
Likely cause	Long-term saturation of the stack, arising from the defective flaunching at item C1 above and from the eroded joints at item C3, followed by frost action. Water is drawn into the brickwork, freezes, and detaches the face of the brick and the surface of the mortar. The corbel course is the most exposed part of the stack and receives the most water; it fails first. Sulphate attack from flue gases acting on saturated mortar is a common contributory factor in stacks of this age and should be borne in mind.
Nature of defect	Active failure, and progressive. This is not a stable defect: each winter will remove more material.
Consequence if left	Continued loss of brick and mortar will weaken the head of the stack. Spalled fragments and, in due course, whole bricks will fall onto the roof slopes below, breaking slates and blocking gutters. In the longer term the structural adequacy of the upper courses of the stack will be called into question. We are not, on the evidence available, suggesting that the stack is presently unstable; we are saying that it is deteriorating and that it should not be left.
Recommendation	Cut out and replace all spalled and defective bricks with sound salvaged or matching new bricks, rake out and repoint the fractured course and the courses above and below it in a lime-based mortar to match the original, and reinstate the corbel detail. This work should be undertaken with the flaunching renewal at item C1 and the repointing at item C3.
Further investigation	A close hands-on inspection from a suitable access platform is required before the extent of the work can be specified and priced, and to establish whether any material is presently loose. We recommend that this is arranged as the first step. If, on that inspection, significant movement or instability is found, a structural engineer should be consulted as to whether the upper part of the stack requires taking down and rebuilding.
Remaining life	The affected brickwork requires repair now. Repaired and repointed, the stack would be expected to remain serviceable for a further extended period, subject to the flaunching and flashings being maintained.

7.4 C3 Open and eroded mortar joints to the stack generally

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	Main chimney stack to the rear slope, generally. The remaining stacks were not examined closely and this item is not extended to them.
Reference	Plate 7 (C); Photographs 11, 12, 42.
Observation	The mortar joints to the stack are generally recessed and eroded, with the mortar standing well back from the face of the brick over

	much of the visible area. Localised areas of harder, later cement-based repointing are present and are of a different colour and texture to the original.
Likely cause	Age and exposure. Stacks are the most exposed masonry on any building and their pointing is always the first to go. The harder cement patches are the result of earlier repairs undertaken in an inappropriate mortar.
Nature of defect	Deterioration. Not an immediate failure, but in our opinion the principal reason for the saturation that has produced items C1 and C2.
Consequence if left	Deeply recessed joints hold water against the brickwork rather than shedding it, so that the stack remains saturated for longer after rain. That saturation drives frost damage and sulphate attack. Hard cement pointing compounds the problem, because it is less permeable than the brick, so that moisture is forced to evaporate through the brick face and takes the face of the brick with it as salts crystallise.
Recommendation	Rake out the defective joints to a depth of at least twice the joint width and repoint in a lime-based mortar of a strength appropriate to the brick, finished flush or slightly recessed to match the original profile. The existing hard cement patches should be cut out and replaced as part of the same operation. This work should be combined with items C1 and C2.
Further investigation	None beyond the close inspection recommended at item C2.
Remaining life	The existing pointing is at the end of its serviceable life on the principal stack. Correctly executed lime repointing in this position would be expected to give of the order of twenty-five to forty years' service.

8.0 PARAPETS AND HIGH-LEVEL MASONRY

8.1 General

- 8.1.1 The high-level masonry of the property is in mixed condition. The front elevation is faced in good-quality red brick which remains sound, but the rendered dressings at high level have failed. The rear and flank elevations are of London stock brick with black-painted engineering brick at the plinth, and here the mortar has eroded severely over large areas.
- 8.1.2 Parapets with copings terminate the closet-wing roof and the flank of the building. We were able to see the copings from above but not to examine their bedding.

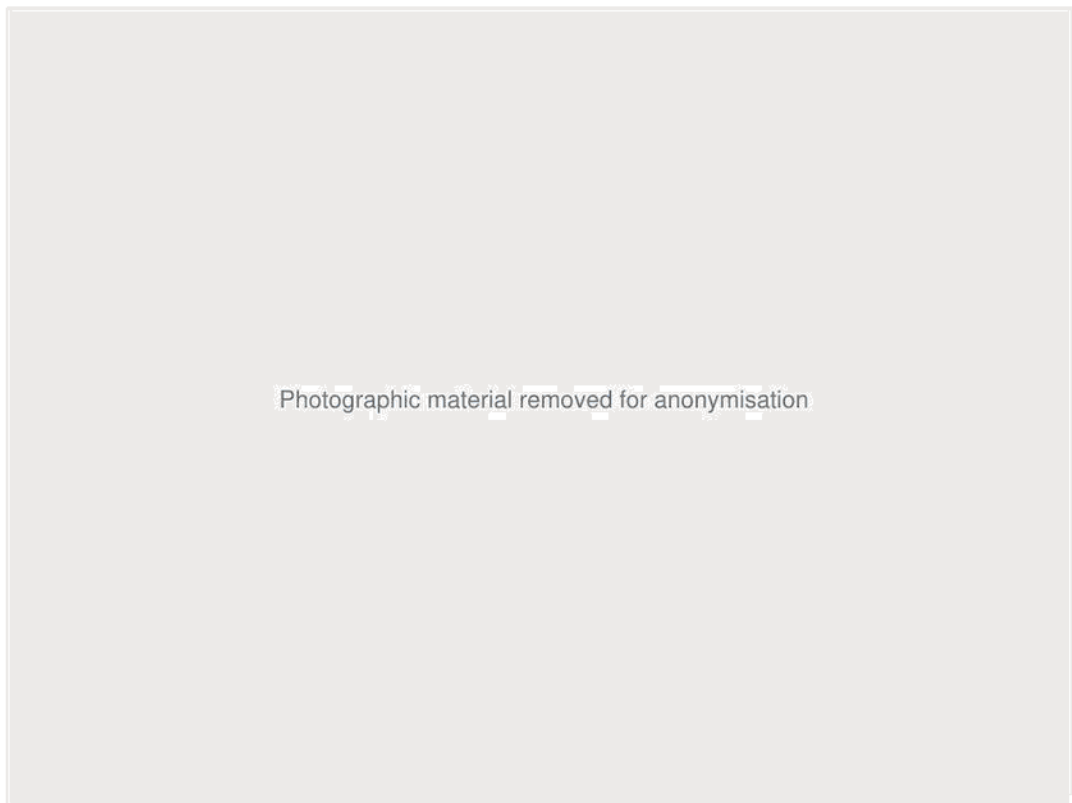


Plate 8. Front elevation, high-level render bands and window heads (Defect M5)

- A** Render to the moulded band and window head is blown and delaminating; loose fragments overhang below.
- B** Further loss of render and open cracking to the projecting band across the bay.
- C** Earlier render patch repairs, differing in texture and colour and already parting at the edges.

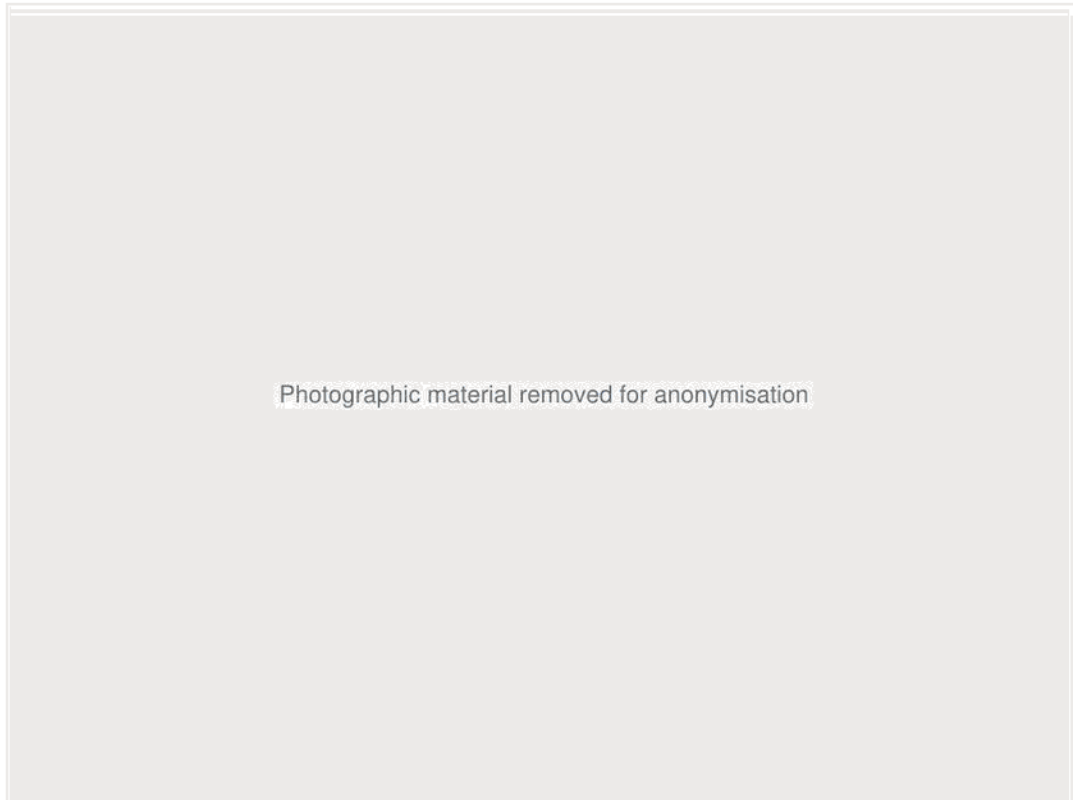
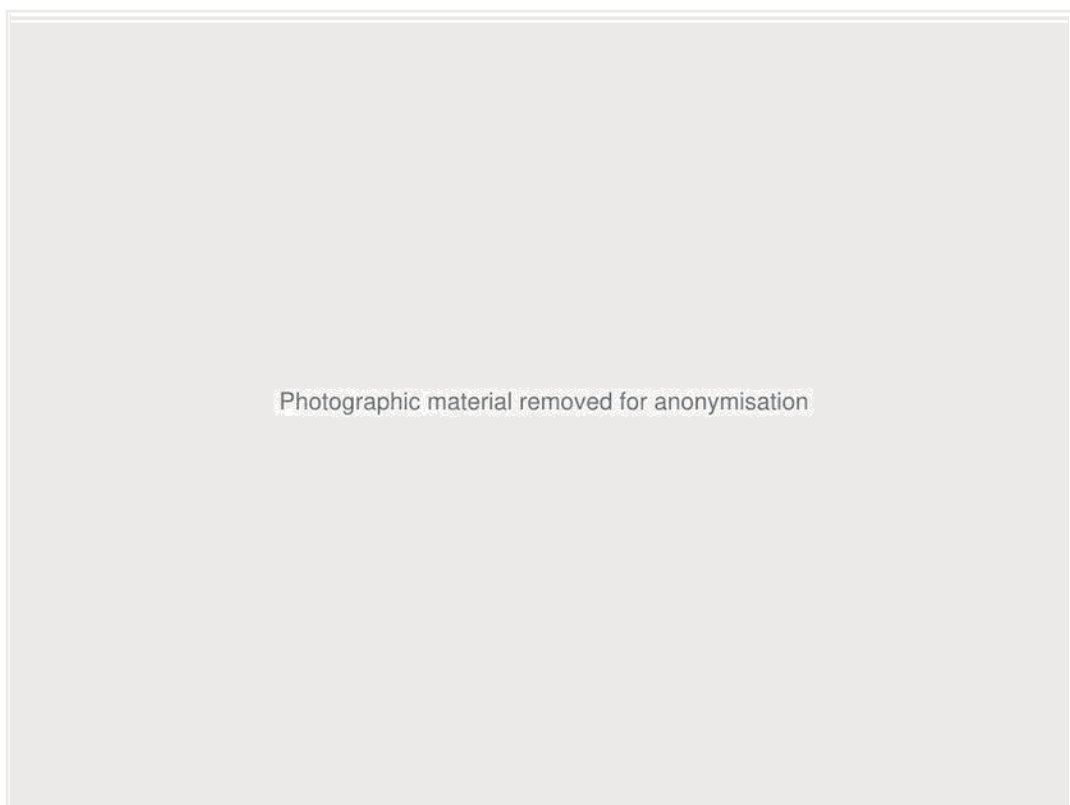


Plate 9. Front elevation corner, render band below the eaves (Defect M5)

- A** Coating and render spalling away from the substrate over a substantial length of the moulded band.
- B** Roughcast render above, with a large patch repair and black staining beneath the gutter line.
- C** Exposed substrate and black organic staining consistent with prolonged saturation of this detail.



Photographic material removed for anonymisation

Plate 10. Flank wall at high level, soil and waste stack (Defects M3, M7, RW6)

- A** Severe erosion of the mortar joints and loss of brick arrises over a wide area of the flank wall.
- B** Displaced / lifting weathering detail and cracked render at the head of the wall.
- C** Cast iron stack and branch connections, painted over; joints not readily inspectable from ground level.

8.2 M1 Established vegetation growing from high-level brickwork

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Rear elevation at high level, immediately to the left of the closet-wing abutment, and in smaller quantity at other points on the rear and flank elevations.
Reference	Plate 6 (A); Photographs 41, 42.
Observation	A self-seeded plant of some size, with woody stems and established foliage, is growing directly out of the brickwork joints at high level. It is not a plant trained onto the wall from below; it is rooted in the wall itself. Smaller growth is present elsewhere.
Likely cause	Vegetation of this kind establishes where the masonry is persistently damp and where the joints are open enough to hold soil and seed. Its presence is therefore itself evidence of a long-standing water problem at this point, which we consider to be associated with the defective rainwater goods and the open masonry nearby.
Nature of defect	Active failure. The plant is both a symptom of an existing defect and a cause of further damage.

Consequence if left	Roots penetrate and widen the mortar joints, displacing masonry as they thicken, and retain moisture permanently in the wall. Left in place, growth of this size will in time displace individual bricks. The saturation it evidences is also finding its way into the wall construction.
Recommendation	Remove the vegetation. It should be cut back to the wall face and treated with an appropriate systemic herbicide applied to the cut stem rather than simply pulled out, as pulling will bring masonry with it and will leave the root in place to regrow. Once the plant is dead the roots should be carefully removed and the joints raked out and repointed in a lime-based mortar. The cause of the persistent dampness at this point – principally the rainwater defects at items RW1 and RW2 and the masonry defect at item M2 – must be addressed at the same time or the growth will return.
Further investigation	The extent of root penetration and of any consequent displacement of masonry can only be established once the growth has been removed and the wall examined at close quarters.
Remaining life	Not applicable.

8.3 M2 Open recess and loss of masonry at the closet-wing abutment

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Rear elevation, immediately above the raking abutment of the closet-wing roof, beneath the projecting brick course.
Reference	Plate 6 (B); Photographs 41, 42.
Observation	There is an open recess in the brickwork immediately above the roof abutment, where mortar and brick material have been lost to an appreciable depth. The opening is dark, indicating that it extends back into the thickness of the wall rather than being a surface defect. It sits directly above the raking flashing recorded at item L2.
Likely cause	Long-term saturation followed by frost damage, in a position that receives concentrated run-off from the wall above and from the roof abutment. Loss of the flashing chase, and earlier cutting into the wall for the flashing, are likely to have contributed.
Nature of defect	Active failure. This is an open route for water into the wall.
Consequence if left	Water entering here passes into the thickness of the wall directly above the closet-wing roof and above the accommodation behind. It is the most likely single source of any water ingress affecting the rear of the building. Continued frost action will enlarge the opening and will destabilise the projecting course above it.
Recommendation	Cut out the defective and missing masonry, rebuild in matching salvaged brick bonded into the existing work, and repoint in a lime-based mortar. Form a proper chase and renew the raking flashing at item L2 as part of the same operation. We regard these two items as a single repair and they should be tendered and executed together.

Further investigation	The depth and extent of the loss behind the visible face cannot be established until the area is opened up. A contingency should be allowed. If, on opening up, the loss is found to extend through a substantial thickness of the wall, we should be re-consulted.
Remaining life	The repair is required now. Properly executed, it should be permanent.

8.4 M3 Widespread erosion of mortar joints to the flank and rear elevations

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	Flank elevation at high level and generally; rear elevation and the black-painted engineering brickwork of the rear passage.
Reference	Plate 13 (C); Plate 14 (B); Plate 10 (A); Photographs 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 61.
Observation	Over large areas of the flank and rear elevations the mortar has eroded deeply, standing well back from the face of the brick, and in places is soft and friable. The arrises of many bricks have been lost. To the black engineering brickwork of the rear passage the position is variable: some joints are washed out entirely, while others have been repointed comparatively recently in a soft, sand-rich mortar which is already breaking down and washing out again.
Likely cause	Age, exposure and the absence of a cyclical repointing regime. The recent soft repointing appears to have been executed in an inappropriate mix, or applied to joints that were not raked out sufficiently, or applied to saturated masonry – in each case it will not last.
Nature of defect	Deterioration, at a moderate rate over most of the area, accelerating locally where rainwater is discharging onto the wall (see items RW2 and M6).
Consequence if left	Deeply recessed joints hold water and hasten the deterioration of the brick face. Over time the wall becomes progressively more permeable and dampness will reach the internal face, particularly on the exposed flank. This is not an urgent matter across most of the area, but it is a substantial future cost which will be considerably more expensive if allowed to reach the point at which brick replacement is required on a large scale.
Recommendation	Programme a repointing of the flank and rear elevations over the medium term, prioritising the areas of deepest erosion, the areas beneath defective rainwater goods, and the high-level areas where access will in any event be required for the roof works. Rake out to at least twice the joint width, remove all loose material, and repoint in a lime-based mortar of a strength appropriate to the brick, finished to match the original profile. Cement-rich mortars should not be used. Defective bricks should be cut out and replaced as the work proceeds.
Further investigation	A close inspection of the flank elevation from a suitable access platform will be required to specify and price the work. The condition of the wall behind the recent soft repointing should be examined at that time.
Remaining life	The existing pointing is at or approaching the end of its serviceable life over much of the flank and rear elevations.

Localised repairs are required in the short term where associated with the rainwater defects; comprehensive repointing should be anticipated within approximately one to three years. Correctly executed lime repointing would be expected to give of the order of thirty to fifty years' service.

8.5 M4 Open joints to the brick creasing course below the front bay gutter

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	Front elevation, the projecting brick creasing course beneath the gutter to the bay, both angles.
Reference	Plate 16 (C); Photographs 49, 50, 51.
Observation	The mortar to the projecting brick creasing course beneath the gutter is open and eroded over most of its length, with a number of joints entirely lost. The condition is noticeably worse in the vicinity of the gutter angle recorded at item RW5.
Likely cause	Concentrated run-off from the gutter above, exacerbated by the overflow at the obstructed angle joint. A projecting creasing course is highly exposed and its joints are always the first on an elevation to fail.
Nature of defect	Deterioration, accelerated by the gutter defect. It should be regarded as consequential damage from item RW5.
Consequence if left	Water entering the open joints of a projecting course saturates the masonry beneath and, on a front elevation of this quality, will in time cause the bricks themselves to spall. It also contributes to the staining and decoration failure to the painted cornice below.
Recommendation	Rake out and repoint the creasing course in a lime-based mortar, and cut out and replace any brick whose face has been lost. This should follow, not precede, the clearance and repair of the gutter at item RW5 – there is no point in repointing beneath a gutter that is still overflowing.
Further investigation	None.
Remaining life	The pointing to this course requires renewal. Once the gutter defect is remedied, renewed pointing should give a long service life.

8.6 M5 Blown and delaminating render to the front elevation bands and window heads

Priority	1 – Urgent / immediate
Location	Front elevation at high level: the moulded rendered band and window head at the right-hand return of the bay, the projecting band across the bay itself, and the roughcast rendered panel beneath the eaves.
Reference	Plate 8; Plate 9; Photographs 52, 53, 54.
Observation	The render to the moulded band and to the window heads at high level appears blown and to have lost adhesion over a substantial length, so far as can be judged from photographs taken at a distance. The coating and the render behind it have parted from the substrate in large flakes; in places the render is detached and

overhangs the face of the wall below. The exposed substrate is discoloured and there is heavy black organic staining. Earlier patch repairs, of different colour and texture, are already parting at their edges. The roughcast render panel beneath the eaves shows a large patch repair and black staining along its lower edge beneath the gutter line.

Likely cause	Long-term saturation of the render from above and behind, most probably arising from the failure of the pointing to the creasing courses and copings above, from run-off at the gutter line, and from the absence of an effective throat or drip to the moulded band. Once water is behind a render coat it separates the render from the substrate by freezing and by salt crystallisation. Earlier patch repairs in a stronger material have compounded the problem by trapping moisture.
Nature of defect	Active failure. The render is detaching, and the detachment is progressive.
Consequence if left	The immediate concern is safety. This material is at high level directly above the front approach, the entrance steps and the pavement. Detached render falling from that height would cause serious injury. Beyond that, continued loss of the render exposes the substrate to the weather, and water will pass into the wall and reach the internal face.
Recommendation	This item should be treated as urgent. Arrange for a competent contractor to attend with a suitable access platform, sound the render by tapping over its whole extent at high level, and remove all loose and hollow-sounding material to a sound edge. Pending permanent repair, the area beneath should be kept clear if there is any doubt about the security of the material. Thereafter cut back to a sound edge, prepare the substrate and re-render in a lime-based render compatible with the original, reinstating the moulded profile and forming a proper drip so that water is thrown clear. Redecorate on completion in a permeable mineral or lime-based coating; a modern impermeable masonry paint should not be used, as it will trap moisture and cause the same failure to recur.
Further investigation	The extent of the loss of adhesion cannot be established from the ground or from photographs. It can only be established by sounding the render at close quarters, and it is very likely to prove more extensive than is presently visible. Sounding should be the first step and should be arranged without delay.
Remaining life	The render coating at high level has reached the end of its serviceable life and requires renewal. Renewed lime render, correctly detailed and maintained, would be expected to give of the order of twenty-five to forty years' service before renewal, with redecoration on a five to seven year cycle.

8.7 M6 Saturation staining to render and masonry below defective rainwater goods

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Rear passage, beneath the truncated rainwater pipe; rendered wall to the side passage at low level; rear elevation generally beneath gutter joints.
Reference	Plate 13 (B); Plate 17 (A); Photographs 25, 55, 56.

Observation	Dark saturation staining, with white salt deposition at its margins, is present in the brickwork immediately below the truncated rainwater pipe recorded at item RW2. Separately, a broad discoloured band extends across the rendered wall of the side passage at low level, of a shape and position consistent with repeated wetting from the pipework above rather than with rising dampness.
Likely cause	Direct consequence of the rainwater defects at items RW1, RW2 and RW6. Water discharging from an open pipe end, or leaking from a joint, wets the same area of wall repeatedly.
Nature of defect	Active, in our opinion. The pattern of the staining, the salt deposition, and its position directly beneath a discharging pipe are more consistent with continuing wetting than with a single historic episode. We were not able to confirm that in dry weather and the position should be re-examined after rainfall.
Consequence if left	Repeated saturation of masonry leads to frost damage, salt crystallisation and, on a rendered wall, to loss of adhesion of the render. Where the wall is a party or flank wall to habitable accommodation, penetrating dampness on the internal face is a realistic prospect. The salt deposition already visible indicates that soluble salts are being mobilised within the masonry, which will continue to cause decorative damage even after the source is cured.
Recommendation	Cure the source first: items RW1, RW2 and RW6. Once the wall has been allowed a substantial period to dry – we would suggest not less than three months, and preferably through a summer – reassess the affected areas. Make good the pointing and any spalled brickwork, and redecorate the render in a permeable coating. Do not apply any waterproof coating, sealant or "damp-proofing" treatment to the outside face of the wall; that will trap moisture and make the position worse.
Further investigation	The internal face of the wall in the affected areas should be inspected and moisture readings taken, so that a baseline is established before the remedial work and a comparison can be made afterwards. We were not able to inspect the internal face at these positions.
Remaining life	Not applicable; consequential damage which will cease to progress once the source is cured.

8.8 M7 Parapet copings – open joints and organic growth

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	Parapet to the closet-wing roof and to the flank of the building; copings generally.
Reference	Plate 10 (B); Photographs 8, 10, 12, 43, 61.
Observation	The copings to the parapets are bedded in mortar which is open at a number of joints, with moss and organic growth established in the openings. At one high-level position a weathering detail appears displaced or lifting and the render beneath is cracked. We were not able to establish whether any coping is loose.

Likely cause	Age, exposure and the absence of a maintenance regime. Copings are horizontal surfaces at the most exposed position on the building and their joints fail early.
Nature of defect	Deterioration. Potentially an active route for water into the parapet.
Consequence if left	A parapet with open coping joints saturates from the top down. Water then passes into the parapet, behind the roof flashings, and into the wall below. Parapets treated in this way are a classic and persistent source of damp in buildings of this type. In the longer term a loose coping at high level is a safety risk.
Recommendation	Rake out and repoint the coping joints in a lime-based mortar as part of the general high-level repointing at item M3, and remove organic growth. At the time of that work, check each coping for movement and re-bed any that are found to be loose. Where a damp-proof course beneath the coping is found to be absent or defective, consider its introduction, though we would not recommend disturbing sound copings solely for that purpose.
Further investigation	The security of the copings and the presence or otherwise of a damp-proof course beneath them can only be established by close inspection from an access platform. This should be undertaken at the time of the high-level works.
Remaining life	The bedding mortar requires renewal. The copings themselves appear sound and should have a long remaining life once properly re-bedded and pointed.

9.0 GUTTERS AND RAINWATER GOODS

9.1 General

- 9.1.1 This is the most important section of the report. The roof coverings at [REDACTED] are, taken as a whole, in reasonable order. The rainwater disposal system is not, and in two places it is not functioning as a rainwater disposal system at all.
- 9.1.2 Gutters to the front elevation are cast iron, half-round, supported on rise-and-fall brackets to painted timber fascias. To the rear and flanks there is a mixture of cast iron and plastic, with plastic used for later alterations and repairs. Downpipes are cast iron to the front and a mixture elsewhere. Soil and waste pipework is fixed externally, in cast iron on the older runs and in plastic where altered.
- 9.1.3 The system has been altered piecemeal over a long period and, in the places recorded below, has been left in a condition which no competent contractor would have considered acceptable as a finished arrangement.

Photographic material removed for anonymisation

Plate 11. Flat roof at the rear abutment (Defects RW1, RW4, R5, F3)

- A** Rainwater downpipe discharging into a plastic container supported on loose blocks – see also Plate 12.
- B** Waste / soil branch and trap laid on the roof surface with no upstand or protection to the covering.
- C** Organic debris and dead vegetation accumulated in the abutment gutter to the glazed roof below.
- D** Surface crazing and open lines to the deck covering, in an area consistent with slow drainage.

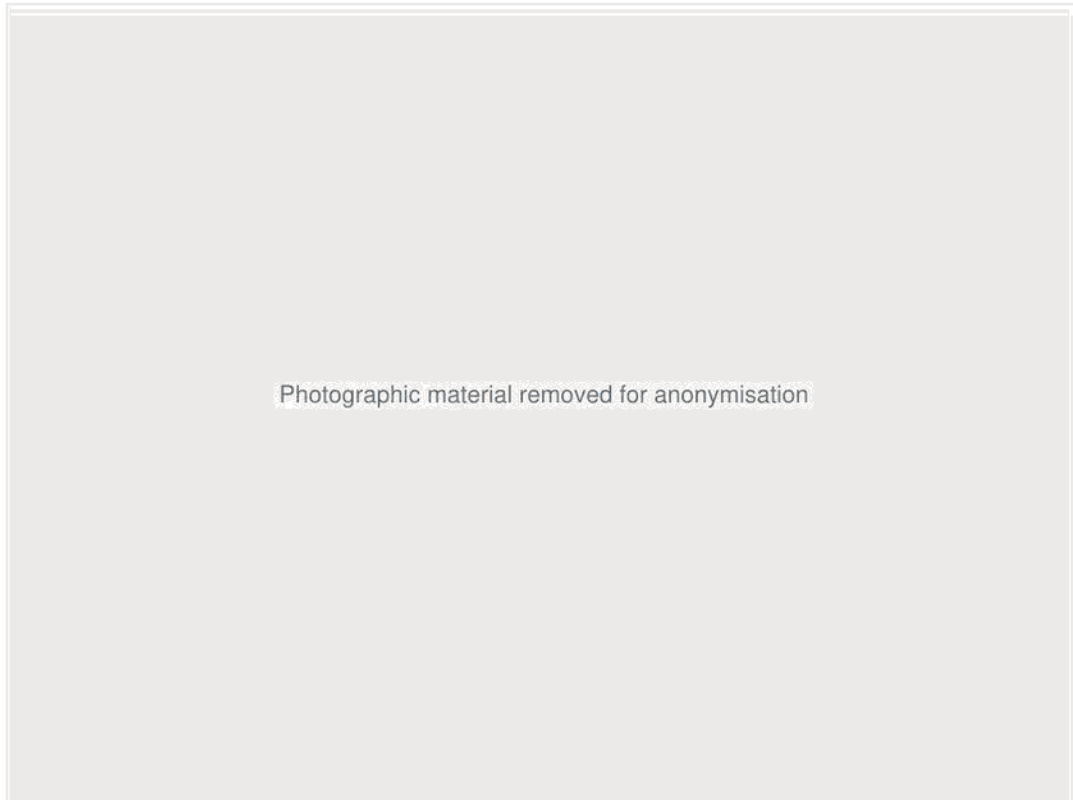


Plate 12. Improvised rainwater discharge at high level (Defect RW1)

- A** Open plastic container receiving the discharge of a rainwater pipe, drained by a length of garden hose.
- B** Cut end of the downpipe delivering directly into the container – no permanent connection or outlet.
- C** Container supported on loose concrete blocks and brick set on the parapet – no fixing or restraint.

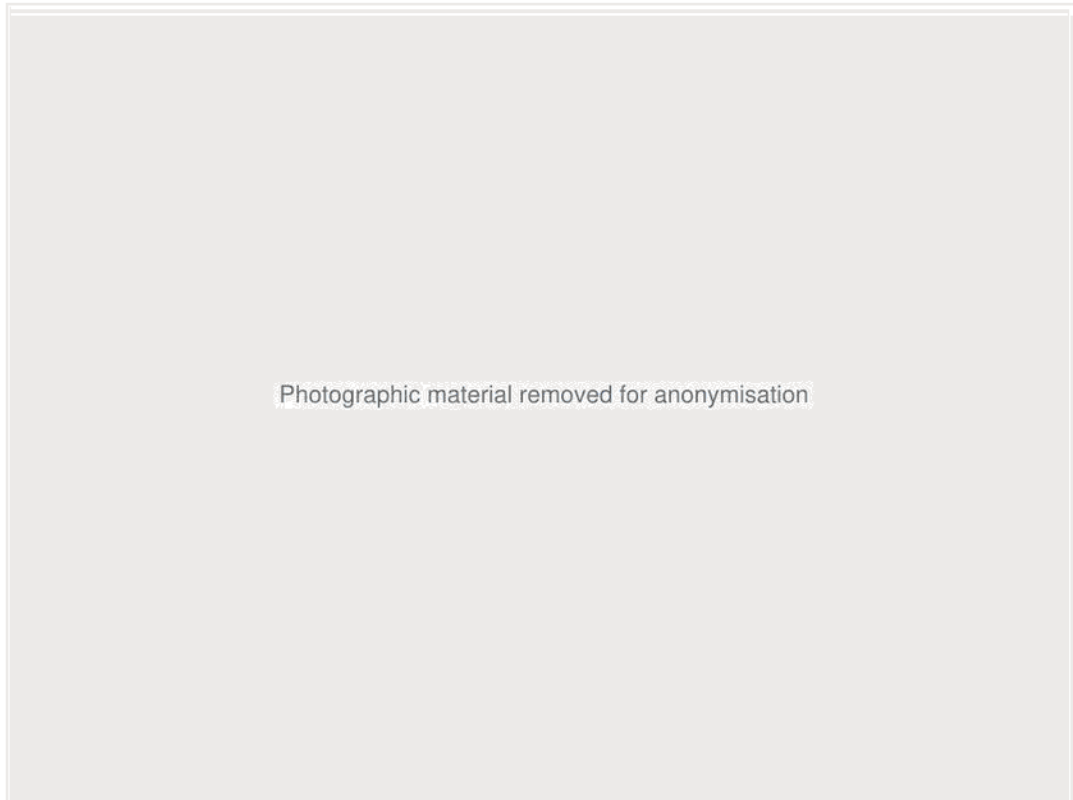


Plate 13. Truncated rainwater pipe, rear passage (Defects RW2, M6, M3)

- A** Downpipe cut off short and terminating open-ended above the wall face, with no shoe or connection.
- B** Corresponding dark saturation staining and salt deposition to the brickwork immediately below.
- C** Recently applied, soft sand-rich pointing to the adjoining engineering brickwork, already washing out.

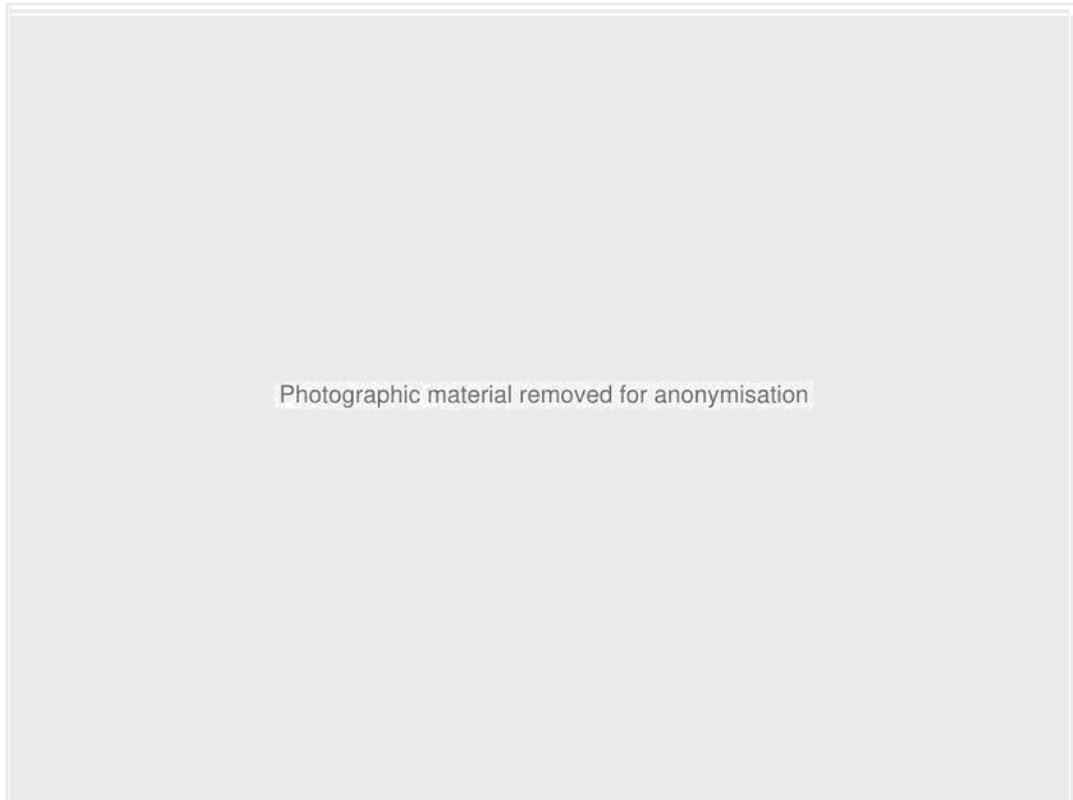


Plate 14. Soil and waste pipework at eaves level, rear passage (Defects RW3, M3)

- A** Adhesive tape and fabric bandage wrapped around a soil / waste pipe joint – a temporary repair only.
- B** Open, washed-out and locally re-pointed mortar joints to the black engineering brickwork.
- C** Air brick / vent at high level, unprotected and open to the wall construction behind.

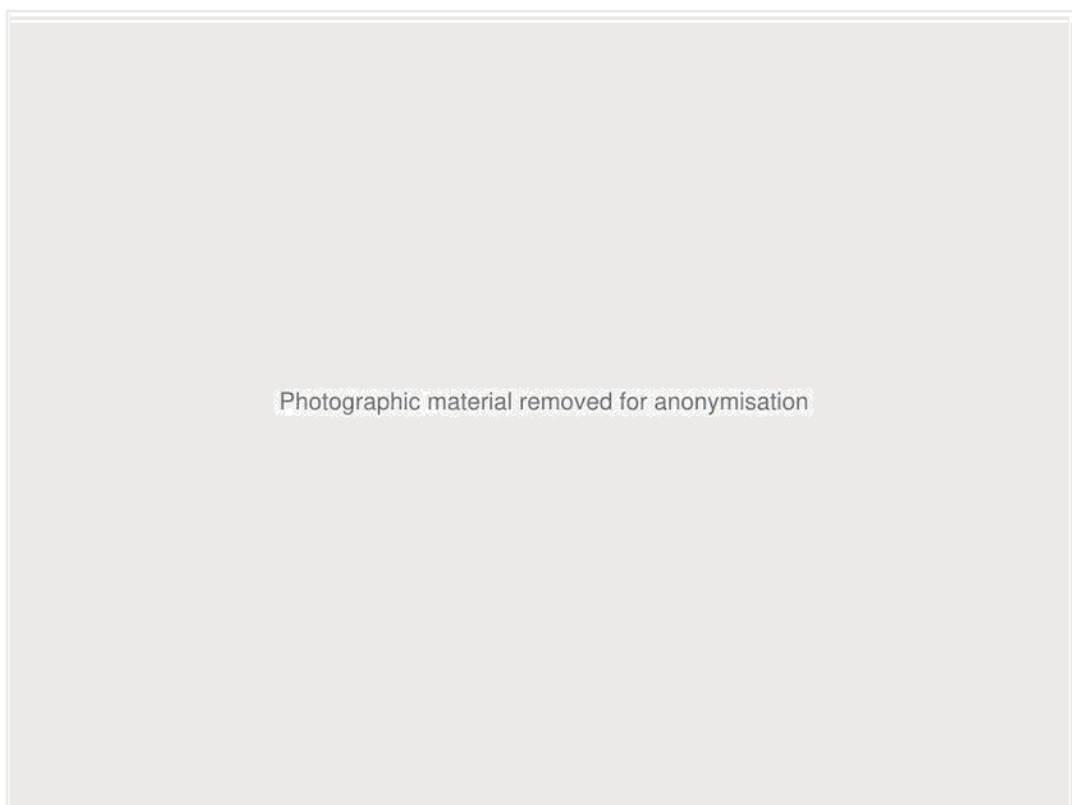


Plate 15. Eaves, gutter outlet and pipework, rear passage (Defects RW3, E1)

- A** Second taped repair to a pipe joint, immediately below the gutter outlet.
- B** Eaves boarding with weathered, unprotected timber and failed decorations; joints open.
- C** Open joint at the soffit / wall junction, offering a potential entry point for birds and vermin.

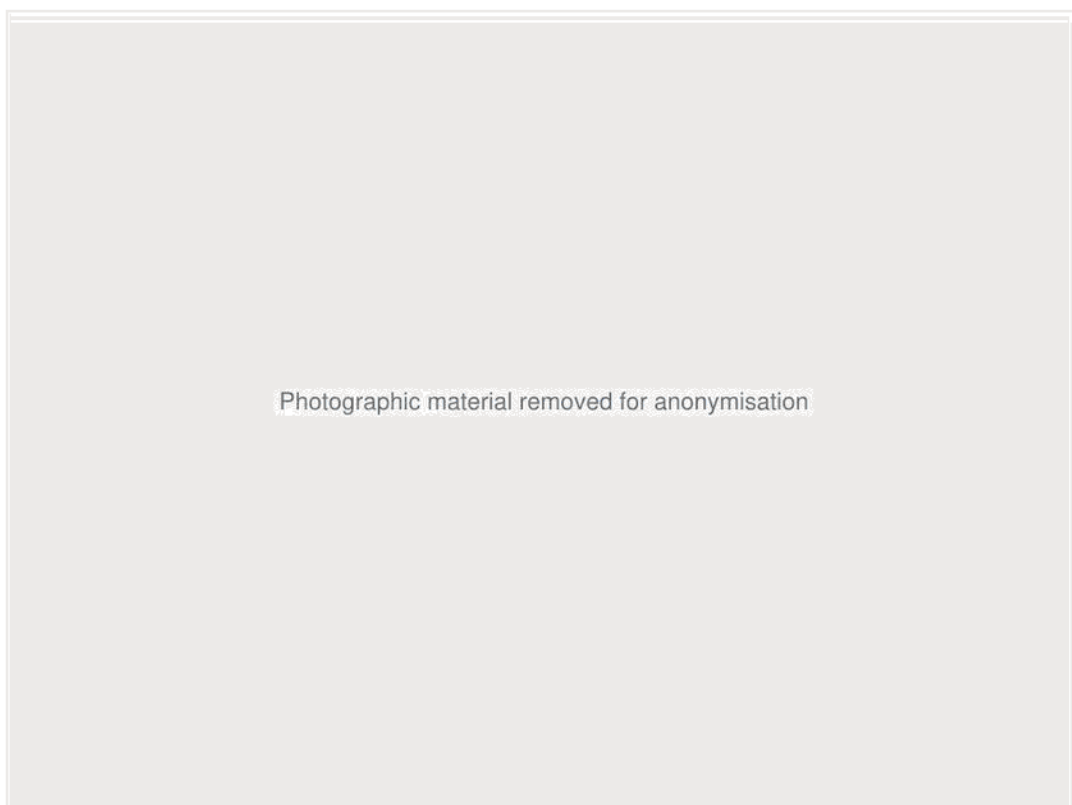


Plate 16. Front bay gutter and eaves, right-hand angle (Defects RW5, M4)

- A** Dead leaves and vegetation lodged in and hanging from a cob web adjacent to the mitred gutter angle; the gutter is obstructed at this point.
- B** Painted cornice directly below the angle joint.
- C** Open and eroded mortar joints to the brick creasing course beneath the gutter.

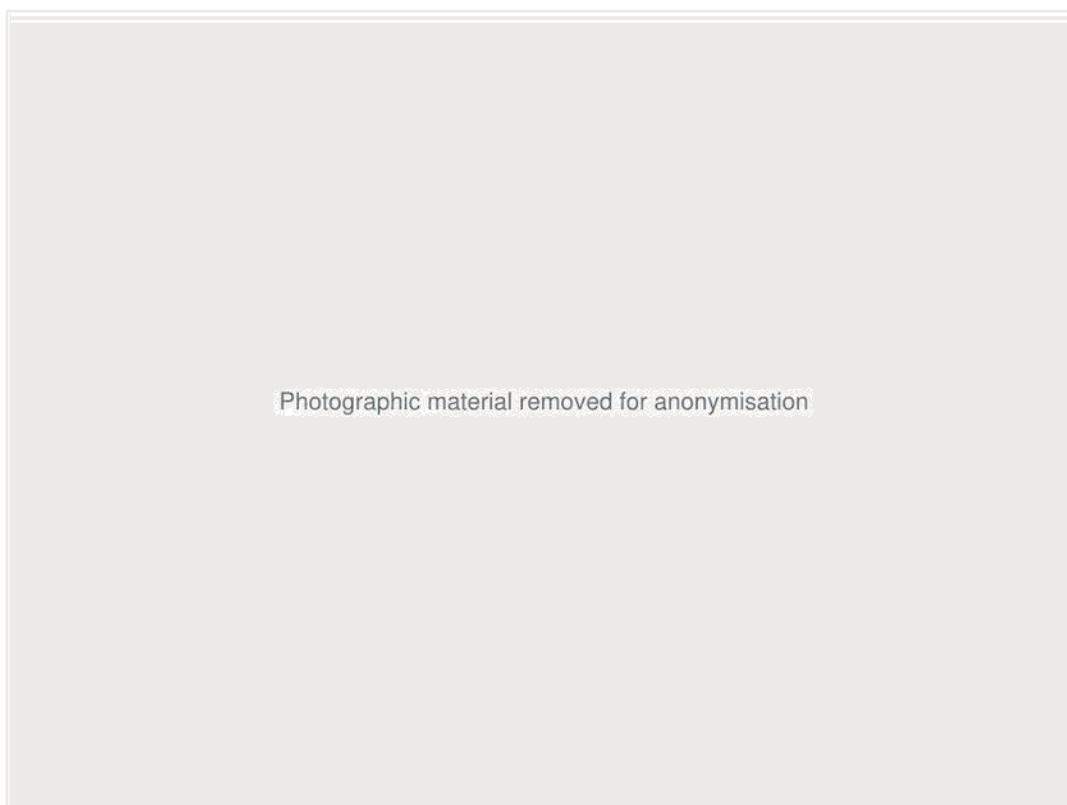


Plate 17. Side passage at low level, below the rainwater stack (Defects M6, RW6, RW7)

- A** Broad discoloured band to the rendered wall face, consistent with repeated wetting from above.
- B** Downpipe offset and joint at the base of the stack, close to the wall face.
- C** Gully receiving the discharge; the surround is silted and partially obstructed by leaf litter.

9.2 RW1 Improvised rainwater discharge into an open container at high level

Priority	1 – Urgent / immediate
Location	Rear of the property at first-floor level, at the parapet adjoining the flat roof terrace, immediately beside the upper flat's window.
Reference	Plate 11 (A); Plate 12; Photographs 6, 29, 30.
Observation	A rainwater downpipe has been cut and terminates directly over an open plastic container – a builder's bucket or paint kettle of around twenty-five litres – which stands on the parapet on a stack of loose concrete blocks and a brick. A length of green garden hose has been laid into the container, apparently to siphon or lead water away. The container is not fixed, not covered and not connected to any drainage. It is not restrained in any way.
Likely cause	An improvised measure, presumably introduced because the downpipe below has been removed, has failed, or discharges somewhere that is no longer acceptable. Its origin is not apparent from inspection.
Nature of defect	Active failure. This arrangement does not dispose of rainwater; it collects a small proportion of it and allows the rest to overflow.
Consequence if left	A container of this capacity would be expected to fill and overflow quickly in any moderate rainfall from a roof area of this size. We

have measured neither the container nor the contributing area, but the disparity between them is obvious. Once it overflows, water discharges directly onto the parapet, the adjacent brickwork and the roof surface below in an uncontrolled manner. This is at high level, immediately above and adjacent to the fabric enclosing the accommodation below, including the Client's flat. It is a highly probable contributor to the saturation of the rear masonry recorded at items M1, M2 and M6. Separately, and independently of the water, a plastic container on loose concrete blocks on a parapet at first-floor level is a falling-object risk to anyone in the passage or garden below, and the blocks themselves are unrestrained.

Recommendation	This item requires attention as a matter of urgency. Remove the container, the hose and the loose blocks immediately, and make the parapet safe. Establish where this downpipe formerly discharged and reinstate a permanent, properly bracketed and jointed rainwater downpipe, taken down the elevation and connected either to the existing surface water drainage or to a suitable gully. The pipe must be adequately sized for the roof area it serves and must be accessible for clearance. A temporary measure in the interim – for example a properly secured length of pipe taken down to a gully – is preferable to leaving the present arrangement in place, but should not be regarded as the solution.
Further investigation	The route and capacity of the existing surface water drainage serving this part of the building should be established before the downpipe is reinstated, so that the reinstated pipe is connected to a drain that can take it. We recommend a drainage survey, including a CCTV inspection of the relevant runs, before the work is specified. Where the arrangement crosses a demise boundary, the Client should be guided by her solicitor as to how the work is to be commissioned; we express no view on that.
Remaining life	Not applicable. The present arrangement has no proper function and should be removed.

9.3 RW2 Truncated rainwater pipe discharging open-ended onto the wall

Priority	1 – Urgent / immediate
Location	Rear passage, at approximately first-floor level, on the elevation adjoining the rendered flank.
Reference	Plate 13 (A, B); Photographs 23, 24, 25.
Observation	A rainwater pipe has been cut off short and terminates open-ended above the wall face. There is no shoe, no offset, no connection and no receiving gutter or hopper beneath it. Fragments of mortar are lodged on the cut end. Immediately below the open end the brickwork is dark-stained with a distinct plume of saturation, and white salt efflorescence has formed at the margins of the stain.
Likely cause	The pipe below has been removed, or has fallen away, and has not been reinstated. The staining strongly suggests that the pipe remains live and is discharging, although we did not see it in use and no water test was carried out.
Nature of defect	Active failure, and the evidence of its effect is already on the wall.

Consequence if left	If, as appears to be the case, the pipe remains live, every fall of rain will discharge the contents of a section of roof directly onto the same area of masonry. That produces exactly the saturation, salt movement and frost damage recorded at items M3 and M6, and in due course penetrating dampness on the internal face of the wall. It also appears to be washing out the recently applied pointing to the engineering brickwork alongside.
Recommendation	Reinstate the missing length of rainwater pipe. The pipe should be taken down the elevation on proper brackets, with correctly formed joints, and connected to a gully or to the surface water drainage. A shoe should be fitted where it discharges over a gully. This should be done at the same time as item RW1 so that the rainwater arrangements to the rear of the property are resolved as a whole.
Further investigation	The capacity and condition of the receiving drainage should be confirmed – see item RW1. The extent of damage to the masonry behind the stained area should be assessed once the discharge has ceased and the wall has dried.
Remaining life	Not applicable. The remaining lengths of pipe appear serviceable and can be extended.

9.4 RW3 Taped repairs to soil and waste pipe joints

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Rear passage at eaves level: two separate joints, one on the branch adjoining the gutter outlet and one immediately below it.
Reference	Plate 14 (A); Plate 15 (A); Photographs 23, 24, 27, 28.
Observation	Two joints in the soil or waste pipework at high level have been wrapped in silver adhesive tape and, at one of them, in a fabric bandage beneath the tape. The tape is weathered, lifting at its edges and clearly of some age. No permanent repair has been made.
Likely cause	A leaking joint, repaired by the quickest available means. The presence of two such repairs in close proximity suggests the pipework in this run is at or near the end of its life, or that the joints were never properly made.
Nature of defect	Active failure, temporarily masked. Adhesive tape is not a repair; it is a delaying measure with a life of months rather than years.
Consequence if left	When the tape fails, the joint will leak again. Depending on which pipe is affected, that discharge is either rainwater or foul waste, discharging at high level onto masonry and, in the case of foul waste, presenting a hygiene concern in addition. Either will saturate the wall at that point and contribute to the deterioration recorded at item M3. A leaking soil pipe close to a habitable window is also a nuisance.
Recommendation	Have the pipework at this location examined at close quarters by a competent contractor. The taped joints should be opened up and permanently repaired – by remaking the joint, by replacing the defective section, or, if the run proves to be generally defective, by renewing it. Establish first which service each pipe carries, as the specification and the urgency differ. Do not simply re-tape.

Further investigation	The condition of the remainder of the run, and whether the joints have failed because of the age of the pipework or because of a blockage or restriction downstream, should be established at the time of the repair. A drainage test may be appropriate.
Remaining life	The taped joints have no reliable remaining life. The pipework generally appears to be approaching the latter part of its serviceable life and renewal of the affected run should be anticipated within the medium term.

9.5 RW4 Waste branch and trap laid on the flat roof covering

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Rear flat roof / terrace, adjacent to the abutment with the main rear wall.
Reference	Plate 11 (B); Photograph 6.
Observation	A length of plastic waste pipe incorporating a trap or bottle gully lies directly on the surface of the flat roof covering. It is not supported clear of the covering, not fixed, and appears to have been laid rather than installed.
Likely cause	An alteration carried out without proper provision for the pipework, most probably associated with the same works that produced the arrangement at item RW1.
Nature of defect	Deferred maintenance / defective installation, with the potential to cause active failure of the roof covering.
Consequence if left	Pipework lying on a flat roof abrades the covering under thermal movement and under foot traffic, holds water and debris against it, and prevents its inspection. A trap laid on a roof will not retain its seal reliably and, if it is a waste trap, may allow odour. Any leak from the pipe discharges directly onto the covering at the point where it is most vulnerable, at the abutment.
Recommendation	Have the pipework properly installed: supported clear of the covering on purpose-made supports, correctly falling, and either taken through the roof with a proper weathered penetration or routed down the wall. Inspect the covering beneath the pipe when it is lifted and repair any damage found.
Further investigation	The condition of the covering beneath the pipework cannot be assessed until it is lifted.
Remaining life	Not applicable.

9.6 RW5 Obstructed gutter angle to the front bay, with overflow staining

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Front elevation, cast iron gutter over the bay window, at the right-hand mitred angle.
Reference	Plate 16 (A, B); Photographs 49, 50, 51.
Observation	Dead leaves and vegetation are lodged in the mitred angle of the gutter and hang down from it below the level of the gutter sole, which indicates that the gutter is filled with debris at this point rather than merely holding a few leaves. Directly beneath the angle, dark vertical staining runs down the face of the painted

	timber cornice, and the mortar joints of the creasing course immediately below are the most eroded on the elevation (item M4).
Likely cause	Leaf fall from the mature trees to the front of the property, accumulating at the angle where the flow changes direction, and the absence of a regular clearance regime. Mitred angles in cast iron gutters are the usual point of blockage. It is possible that the angle joint has also opened, but that cannot be established without close inspection.
Nature of defect	Active failure. The staining on the cornice records water repeatedly overflowing at this point.
Consequence if left	An overflowing gutter delivers a concentrated stream of water onto the elevation beneath. Here it is already causing the loss of the pointing to the creasing course, the failure of the decorations to the painted cornice, and staining. It is very likely to be a contributory cause of the render failure recorded at item M5 on the same elevation. Sustained overflow at an eaves position also wets the wall plate and the ends of the roof timbers, which is a common and serious cause of decay that is not visible until the ceiling below is opened.
Recommendation	Clear the gutter thoroughly along its whole length from a suitable access platform, and inspect the angle joint when clear. If the joint is found to have opened, take it apart, clean and re-make it with a suitable jointing compound and new bolts. Check and adjust the falls to the outlet while the access is in place. Include this gutter in a twice-yearly clearance regime thereafter.
Further investigation	The condition of the angle joint, of the gutter sole, and of the timber fascia and the roof timbers behind it cannot be assessed until the gutter has been cleared and inspected at close quarters. If decay is found in the fascia, the eaves timbers behind should be examined.
Remaining life	The cast iron gutter itself, so far as could be seen, appears serviceable with routine maintenance and cyclical redecoration. Cast iron rainwater goods have a very long life if kept clear and painted.

9.7 RW6 Gutters and downpipes generally – alignment, joints and decoration

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	All elevations.
Reference	Plate 15; Plate 17 (B); Plate 10 (C); Photographs 20, 21, 27, 28, 43, 49-51, 55-58, 61.
Observation	The rainwater goods are a mixture of original cast iron and later plastic, with a number of ad hoc alterations, junctions and offsets. Decorations to the cast iron are generally weathered and thin, with the paint film failing on the upper surfaces and at the joints. Cobwebs and debris are lodged at several outlets and junctions. A boxed hopper head serves the rear elevation; seen from below and from the aerial survey it appeared sound and free of obvious corrosion, but its interior could not be inspected and we are unable to say whether it is silted. Alignment and falls appear generally acceptable, so far as could be judged, but could not be

	measured. A number of downpipes are fixed close to the wall face without adequate distance pieces.
Likely cause	Age, incremental alteration, and an absence of cyclical maintenance.
Nature of defect	Deterioration. No individual failure identified beyond those recorded separately above.
Consequence if left	Unpainted cast iron corrodes, and corrosion at a joint causes it to leak. Pipes fixed hard against the wall cannot be painted behind and trap water against the masonry. Debris at outlets causes gutters to back up. None of this is urgent but all of it, left long enough, produces the sort of localised saturation already evident elsewhere on this building.
Recommendation	Establish a maintenance regime: clear all gutters, outlets, hopper heads and gully gratings at least twice a year, checking the hopper interiors for silt, and redecorate the cast iron rainwater goods on a cycle of approximately five years, preparing back to a sound surface and priming bare metal. Where a downpipe is fixed hard to the wall, fit proper distance pieces when the opportunity arises. Replace any plastic component that is a poor match or a poor fit as part of that cycle.
Further investigation	The gutters should be observed during, or immediately after, a period of sustained heavy rain. That is the only reliable way to identify a leaking joint or an inadequate fall, and it cannot be done in dry weather. We would be pleased to attend for that purpose.
Remaining life	The cast iron rainwater goods appear serviceable with routine maintenance and cyclical redecoration and should have a long remaining life. The plastic components are of mixed age and quality; renewal should be anticipated piecemeal.

9.8 RW7 Gullies silted and partially obstructed

Priority	2 – Short term (0–12 months)
Location	Side and rear passages, at the foot of the downpipes.
Reference	Plate 17 (C); Photographs 22, 26, 55, 56.
Observation	The gully gratings receiving the downpipes are silted, with leaf litter and detritus lodged in and around them. Vegetation is growing immediately adjacent. One grating is partially covered.
Likely cause	Leaf fall and the absence of clearance.
Nature of defect	Deferred maintenance, with the capacity to cause active failure.
Consequence if left	A blocked gully causes the downpipe to back up and overflow at its lowest joint, discharging water at the base of the wall – which is precisely where it is least wanted, and where it will produce dampness at low level internally. Standing water at the base of a wall also bridges the damp-proof course where the external level is high.
Recommendation	Clear all gullies and gratings, and include them in the twice-yearly clearance regime. Cut back vegetation encroaching on them. Check that the external ground level at the foot of each downpipe remains at least 150mm below the internal floor level and below any damp-proof course.

Further investigation	If a gully is found not to clear when rodded, a drainage survey should be arranged – see item RW1.
Remaining life	Not applicable; a maintenance item.

10.0 EAVES, FASCIAS AND SOFFITS

10.1 General

- 10.1.1 The eaves are formed in painted timber throughout: decorative moulded fascias, brackets and bargeboards to the front elevation and to the bay, and plainer boarding to the rear and flanks. No plastic replacement has been carried out.
- 10.1.2 Painted timber at the eaves is entirely dependent upon its decorations. Where the paint film fails the timber wets, and decay follows. The eaves is also where a leaking or overflowing gutter does its damage first, and where that damage is hardest to see.

10.2 E1 Eaves boarding – weathered unprotected timber and open joints

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	Rear passage eaves; and locally elsewhere to the rear and flank elevations.
Reference	Plate 15 (B, C); Photographs 27, 28, 43.
Observation	The eaves boarding to the rear passage is substantially bare of paint over a considerable area, with the timber grain raised and weathered to a grey colour. Joints between boards, and at the junction of the soffit with the wall, are open. At one position there is a distinct gap at the soffit / wall junction. Cobwebs and debris have collected in the open joints.
Likely cause	Failure of the decorations and the absence of a redecoration cycle, exacerbated by proximity to a gutter outlet and to the taped pipework at item RW3.
Nature of defect	Deterioration. Not yet failure – the timber appeared sound rather than soft – but it is unprotected and will decay if left.
Consequence if left	Unprotected timber at the eaves absorbs water and decays, and once decay is established in a fascia it spreads readily to the rafter feet and the wall plate behind, where the repair is a great deal more expensive. Open joints at the soffit also provide an entry point for birds and for vermin into the eaves and roof void, which is a nuisance and, where birds nest in a gutter, a further cause of blockage. No purpose-made eaves ventilator was seen to any elevation, which is usual in a building of this date; whether the roof void is adequately ventilated could not be established, no roof void having been accessible.
Recommendation	Prepare and redecorate the eaves joinery to the rear and flanks: rake out and fill open joints, cut out and splice any decayed timber, prime bare wood and apply a full paint system. Close the open joint at the soffit / wall junction with a fitted timber or metal closer rather than with mastic alone, so that vermin entry is prevented. Before any eaves opening is permanently closed, satisfy yourselves that it is not serving as ventilation to the roof void; where the void is found to depend on adventitious ventilation at the eaves, purpose-made vents should be

	introduced in place of the open joints. Undertake this work at the same time as any access is in place for the roof and gutter works.
Further investigation	The timber should be probed at the time of the work to establish whether decay has begun, particularly behind the gutter and at the ends of the boards.
Remaining life	The decorations have no remaining life and require renewal. The timber itself appears serviceable and, once protected, should give a long service life. Thereafter redecorate on a cycle of approximately five years.

10.3 E2 Painted timber cornice and bargeboards – staining and decoration failure

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	Front elevation, the painted timber cornice and mouldings to the bay, particularly beneath the gutter angles; and the decorative bargeboards to the rear.
Reference	Plate 16 (B); Photographs 43, 47, 49, 50, 52.
Observation	The painted timber cornice to the bay carries dark vertical staining beneath the gutter angle recorded at item RW5. The decorations elsewhere on this joinery are generally sound but thin, with local breakdown at the arrises and at the joints. The decorative bargeboards to the rear show similar local breakdown and have dead vegetation lodged against them.
Likely cause	Repeated wetting from the overflowing gutter above at the stained area; ordinary weathering of the paint film elsewhere.
Nature of defect	Deterioration. Consequential upon item RW5 at the stained area.
Consequence if left	Once the paint film is breached, water enters the timber at the end grain and at the joints, and decay begins from within where it cannot be seen. Decorative mouldings of this quality are expensive to replicate and should not be allowed to reach that point.
Recommendation	Cure the gutter defect at item RW5 first. Thereafter prepare and redecorate the front and rear eaves joinery in full, cutting out and splicing any timber found to be soft. Include this joinery in a five-year redecoration cycle.
Further investigation	Probe the timber beneath the stained area at the time of redecoration to establish whether decay has begun.
Remaining life	The decorations require renewal within the medium term. The timber appears serviceable.

11.0 ROOF PENETRATIONS AND ANCILLARY ITEMS

11.1 General

- 11.1.1 A number of items penetrate or are fixed to the roof and to the high-level elevations. Penetrations are, by their nature, points of weakness in a roof covering, and ancillary fixings into masonry at high level are a common source both of water ingress and of damage to the fabric.

11.2 A1 Aerial masts, satellite equipment and cabling

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	Adjacent to the main chimney stack; on the parapet to the rear; and on the flank. Cabling is run loosely across the rear elevation and roof.
Reference	Photographs 2, 8, 11, 12, 13, 41, 42.
Observation	At least two television aerial masts are fixed at roof level, one lashed to the chimney stack and one bracketed to the parapet, together with a satellite dish on the adjoining property and a quantity of cabling run loosely across the rear elevation, in places simply draped and in places tied off. Some of the aerials appear to be redundant. The fixings could not be examined.
Likely cause	Successive installations over many years, with earlier equipment left in place rather than removed.
Nature of defect	Deferred maintenance. No failure identified, but the position should not be left indefinitely.
Consequence if left	Mast fixings into a chimney stack impose wind loading on masonry that, at this stack, is already deteriorating (items C1 to C3). Bolts and lashings driven into brickwork open the joints and admit water. Redundant equipment continues to impose load and, if a fixing fails, becomes a falling object. Loose cabling chafes the fabric and is unsightly.
Recommendation	Remove all redundant aerials, dishes, brackets and cabling, and make good the fixing holes in a lime-based mortar. Where equipment remains in use, check the fixings for security and re-fix as necessary, preferably to a bracket independent of the chimney stack. Tidy and clip the remaining cabling. This work should be carried out at the time of the stack repairs at items C1 to C3, since the access will be in place.
Further investigation	The security of the existing fixings can only be established by hands-on inspection at the time of the works.
Remaining life	Not applicable.

11.3 A2 Soil vent pipe, flue and extract terminals

Priority	3 – Medium term (1–3 years)
Location	Terminals rising through and adjacent to the rear roof slopes and the flank; ventilating pots to the main stack; air bricks and extract terminals to the rear passage elevation.
Reference	Plate 14 (C); Photographs 2, 6, 8, 23, 24, 27, 28.

Observation	A soil vent pipe terminal rises adjacent to the rear slope and a further terminal is visible at the flank. Terracotta ventilating pots are fitted to the main stack. Air bricks and a plastic extract terminal are fitted to the rear passage elevation, unprotected and open. The weathering of the terminals where they pass through the covering could not be examined closely; no obvious defect was seen.
Likely cause	Not applicable.
Nature of defect	No specific failure identified, subject to the limitations of a visual inspection at a distance.
Consequence if left	Penetration flashings and lead slates are a common source of leakage once the lead has fatigued around the pipe. Open flues and unprotected vents allow the ingress of birds and driving rain.
Recommendation	Examine each penetration flashing and lead slate at close quarters when access is next in place, and re-dress or renew any that is split, lifted or inadequately lapped. Consider fitting purpose-made vermin and rain guards to open vent terminals. Any flue that remains open and is no longer in use should be capped with a ventilated cowl, so that the flue continues to be ventilated but rain is excluded – an unventilated capping should not be used, as it will trap moisture in the stack.
Further investigation	The condition of the penetration weatherings requires close inspection, as above. Whether any flue remains in use, and whether any in use is lined, should be established by a competent person before any capping is undertaken.
Remaining life	Not established; to be assessed on close inspection.

11.4 A3 Rooflights

Priority	4 – Routine / planned maintenance
Location	Large flat rooflight to the rear flat roof; a smaller rooflight to the adjoining lower roof; further rooflights visible on adjoining property.
Reference	Plate 3; Photographs 3, 4, 5, 8.
Observation	The principal rooflight is a large flat unit set on a raised kerb. The glazing appeared intact and no failure of the sealed unit was apparent from above. The defect to its kerb and weathering is recorded separately at item F2. A smaller rooflight is visible on the lower roof adjoining and appeared sound.
Likely cause	Not applicable.
Nature of defect	No defect identified to the units themselves.
Consequence if left	Not applicable.
Recommendation	No action required beyond the repair of the kerb detail at item F2 and periodic cleaning and inspection of the perimeter seal.
Further investigation	None.
Remaining life	The units appear serviceable. We are unable to comment on the condition of the sealed units, the age of which is unknown.

12.0 INTERNAL EVIDENCE

12.1 General

- 12.1.1 We inspected the interior of the Client's ground-floor flat at the locations she identified as being of concern, together with the adjoining rooms. We did not obtain access to the upper flat and we have not inspected any roof void.
- 12.1.2 Readings were taken with a hand-held electrical-resistance moisture meter. We would emphasise that a meter of this type does not measure the moisture content of masonry or plaster directly. It measures electrical conductance, calibrated against timber, and its readings are affected by salts, by conductive materials and by surface condensation. Readings are therefore used comparatively, as an indicator of whether one area differs materially from another, and not as an absolute measurement. Our conclusions below rest on the readings taken together with the appearance, the pattern and the tide lines of the staining.
- 12.1.3 We would also repeat the limitation at Section 1.2.7. The inspection was carried out in dry weather following a dry period. A defect that admits water only in driving rain or in prolonged rainfall would not necessarily have produced a raised reading on the day.

Photographic material removed for anonymisation

Plate 18. Ground-floor flat, living room ceiling / cornice junction (Defect I1)

- A** Light brown staining to the ceiling adjacent to the cornice, with a defined and settled tide line.
- B** Fine crack along the cornice / ceiling junction. Moisture meter readings taken here on the day were low and consistent with dry material, which points to historic rather than currently active water ingress.

12.2 I1 Living room – staining to the ceiling and cornice junction

Priority	4 – Routine / planned maintenance
Location	Ground-floor flat, living room, at the junction of the ceiling with the moulded cornice on the internal wall.
Reference	Plate 18; Photographs 14, 39.
Observation	A light brown stain is present on the ceiling adjacent to the cornice, of irregular shape and with a defined outer margin – a settled tide line – rather than a diffuse or spreading edge. A fine crack runs along the cornice / ceiling junction nearby. Meter readings taken at the centre of the stain, at its margin and on the cornice below were low and did not differ materially from readings taken on adjoining unaffected surfaces. The decorations over the stain were intact, unblistered and not lifting. The plaster was firm to the touch and did not sound hollow.
Likely cause	The staining evidences a past episode of water reaching this position. Given that this is an internal wall and that the cornice runs along it, the possible sources include: a defect above, in the fabric or in the roof, allowing water to track down an internal wall or along a ceiling joist; a plumbing leak from the flat above; or a past overflow. On the evidence available we are not able to identify which of these it was, and it would be wrong of us to attribute it to the roof without better evidence. We note that the Client understands the upper flat's kitchen may be located above this part of the building; if that is right, a plumbing source is at least as likely as a roof source, and possibly more so, since the position is on an internal wall remote from any external wall or roof abutment.
Nature of defect	Historic staining. On the evidence of the day of inspection there is no indication of currently active moisture at this location. The low readings, the settled tide line, the intact decorations and the firm plaster are together consistent with a defect that occurred at some time in the past and has since dried, or has been remedied.
Consequence if left	None, if the source has genuinely ceased. If it has not, and the episode is intermittent, then it will recur and the staining will spread, and prolonged wetting of a lath-and-plaster or plasterboard ceiling will eventually cause it to fail.
Recommendation	We do not recommend opening up or remedial work to the ceiling at this stage. Instead we recommend that the position is monitored: mark the outer margin of the stain lightly in pencil, and date it, so that any extension is immediately apparent. Photograph it. Re-inspect after a period of sustained heavy or driving rain, which is when the position will be most informative. If the stain extends, or if readings rise, or if the decorations begin to blister, the position changes and further investigation should follow immediately.
Further investigation	If the staining recurs, the following should be undertaken, in this order: first, establish with the occupier of the flat above whether there has been a plumbing leak or an overflow at this position, since that is the simplest explanation and the easiest to eliminate; second, if that is excluded, arrange access to the flat above to inspect the floor construction and any pipework in that position; third, if no source is found internally, limited opening-up

of the ceiling at the stained area, and a water test of the roof and the abutments above, would be justified. We would be pleased to advise further at that point.

Remaining life Not applicable.

12.3 I2 Bedroom – earlier plaster repair to the wall and ceiling junction

Priority 4 – Routine / planned maintenance

Location Ground-floor flat, bedroom, on the face of the wall opposite the living room staining at item I1.

Reference Photographs 15, 16, 18.

Observation A clearly defined area of the wall at high level, extending to the ceiling junction, has been re-plastered and made good at some time in the past; the repair is visible as a difference in surface texture and sheen beneath the decorations, extending over roughly a square metre. Meter readings taken across the repair and at the ceiling junction were low and did not differ materially from those on adjoining original plaster.

Likely cause A previous episode of dampness at this position, subsequently repaired. This is the reverse face of the wall affected at item I1 and the two are very likely to share a source.

Nature of defect Historic. There is no evidence of currently active moisture at this location.

Consequence if left None, subject to the same qualification as at item I1.

Recommendation Monitor as at item I1. No remedial work is recommended at this stage. The Client may wish to establish – from any managing agent, from her own records, or from the occupier of the flat above – what this repair was carried out to address, since that information would materially assist in identifying the source if the problem recurs.

Further investigation As item I1.

Remaining life Not applicable.

12.4 I3 Bathroom and remaining accommodation inspected

Priority 4 – Routine / planned maintenance

Location Ground-floor flat: bathroom, bedroom floor and skirtings, and the remaining rooms inspected.

Reference Photographs 17, 31, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40.

Observation Readings taken at the bathroom ceiling and wall junctions, at the skirtings and door linings, and at the bedroom floorboards adjacent to the external wall were all low and consistent with dry material – the timber floor readings, at approximately eight per cent, being within the range normally expected of internal joinery in a heated dwelling. No staining, blistering, salting, mould growth or timber decay was seen. Surface condensation was not evident at the time of inspection, though the inspection was made in warm dry weather when it would not be expected.

Likely cause Not applicable.

Nature of defect	No defect identified.
Consequence if left	Not applicable.
Recommendation	No action required. We would suggest, as a general matter in a flat of this type, that the bathroom extract ventilation is checked for effective operation and that it discharges to the outside air, since ineffective extract is the most common cause of condensation and mould in this form of accommodation. We did not test it and offer no view on its performance.
Further investigation	None.
Remaining life	Not applicable.

13.0 FURTHER INVESTIGATION RECOMMENDED

13.1 General

- 13.1.1 A number of matters cannot be resolved by visual inspection alone. We recommend that the following are arranged, in the order given, and we would be pleased to advise further at each stage.

13.2 Before or With the First Works

- A close, hands-on inspection of the principal chimney stack and of the front elevation render bands, from a mobile elevating work platform or a tower scaffold, to establish whether any material is loose and to allow the extent of the repairs at items C1 to C3 and M5 to be specified and priced properly.
- Sounding of the high-level render on the front elevation over its whole extent, with removal of all loose and hollow material to a sound edge (item M5).
- A close inspection of the ridges and hips, and testing of their bedding, which could not be examined from the air because of the tree canopy and the angles at which the aircraft could be flown (item R7).
- A plumb check of the chimney stacks while access is in place, verticality not being capable of measurement from an oblique aerial photograph (Section 7.0).

13.3 To Resolve the Rainwater Arrangements

- A drainage survey, including CCTV inspection of the surface water runs serving the rear of the property, to establish where the truncated pipes at items RW1 and RW2 formerly discharged and whether the receiving drainage has the capacity and condition to accept them.
- Observation of the gutters and downpipes during, or immediately after, a period of sustained heavy rain. This is the only reliable means of identifying leaking joints and inadequate falls and cannot be done in dry weather (item RW6).

13.4 To Establish the Condition of the Flat Roof

- Access to the roof terrace and a close inspection of the covering, the upstands, the outlets and the rooflight kerb, with any items standing on the covering moved so that it can be seen (items F1 to F3).
- A core sample taken by a flat roofing specialist, to establish the covering type, thickness and build-up, the presence and condition of insulation and vapour control,

and whether the construction is a warm or a cold deck. Until this is done, any statement as to the remaining life of the flat roof, including ours, rests upon appearance alone (item F1).

13.5 If Internal Staining Recurs

- Enquiry of the occupier of the upper flat as to whether there has been a plumbing leak or overflow above the affected area, this being the simplest explanation and the easiest to eliminate (item I1).
- If a plumbing source is excluded, access to the flat above and, if still unresolved, limited opening-up at the stained area together with a water test of the roof and abutments above (item I1).

13.6 General Matters

- Where any flue remains in use, confirmation by a competent person of its condition and of the presence or otherwise of a liner, before any capping or cowl is fitted (item A2).
- A review of the lease and of the management arrangements by the Client's solicitor, so that responsibility for commissioning and paying for the works recorded in this Report can be established. We express no view upon that question – see Section 1.7.

14.0 CONCLUSION

14.1 Conclusion

- 14.1.1 The roofs of [REDACTED] are in a condition broadly consistent with the age, form and exposure of the building. The main rear slate slope appears to have been overhauled comparatively recently and appears sound. There is no evidence of structural distortion or deflection to any roof plane, and no covering appears to require wholesale renewal at this time, subject in the case of the flat roof to its concealed condition.
- 14.1.2 The building's difficulties lie in the management of rainwater rather than in the coverings themselves. At two points the rainwater system does not function as a rainwater system at all: a downpipe discharges into an open container standing on loose blocks at high level, and a second pipe has been cut short and appears to discharge directly onto the wall. The saturation staining, the vegetation growing from the brickwork, the eroded joints and the failing render on this building are all, in our view, the visible consequences of water which is not being taken away in a controlled manner. Items RW1 and RW2 should be dealt with first, because a great deal of the remaining deterioration will slow or stop once they are.
- 14.1.3 The principal chimney stack requires attention within the next twelve months. The flaunching has failed, the oversailing course has fractured and the brickwork is spalling. None of this is unusual in a stack of this age, and none of it suggests instability on the evidence available, but it is progressive and it will not improve. Because it is expensive to gain access to a stack, the flaunching, the brickwork, the pointing, the flashings and the redundant aerial fixings should all be dealt with in a single operation.
- 14.1.4 The failing render at high level on the front elevation is the one item which we would ask the Client to treat as a safety matter rather than as a repair. It is above the entrance approach and the pavement and, although we cannot confirm from a distance that any of it is loose, its appearance is such that it should be sounded and made safe promptly.
- 14.1.5 Internally, the staining reported by the Client is real but, on the evidence of the day, appears historic. Moisture meter readings at each affected location were low and consistent with dry material, the tide lines were settled and the decorations were intact. We would not recommend opening up on that evidence. We would, however, ask the Client to keep the position under review, particularly after driving rain, and we draw attention to the fact that a plumbing source from the flat above is at least as plausible as a roof source at this location. It would be wrong to attribute the staining to the roof without better evidence, and we do not do so.
- 14.1.6 Once the Priority 1 and Priority 2 items are dealt with, the building should be brought within a modest planned maintenance regime: gutters, outlets and abutments cleared twice a year; external joinery redecorated on a five-year cycle; and a high-level inspection every three to five years. Buildings of this type deteriorate through the accumulation of small neglected items far more often than through any single major failure, and regular clearance and redecoration are, by a considerable margin, the most cost-effective work that will be carried out on this property.
- 14.1.7 We would emphasise that this Report is confined to the roof and high-level elements and is not a survey of the building as a whole. The basis upon which we have recorded the tenure of the building, and our reasons for expressing no view upon repairing liability, are set out at Section 1.7 and should be read carefully.
- 14.1.8 We trust that this Report is satisfactory for the Client's present purposes. Should any point require clarification, or should any of the recommended further investigations be required, please do not hesitate to contact us.

HAMPSTEAD CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Roof and high-level condition survey

ANONYMISED SAMPLE | London N8

MRICS

Chartered Building Surveyor

For and on behalf of Hampstead Chartered Surveyors

August 2026

15.0 APPENDIX 1 – Schedule of Works

Schedule of Works

Item	Defect and location	Recommended action	Priority	Timing
1.00	<u>PRIORITY 1 – URGENT / IMMEDIATE</u>			
1.01 RW1	Improvised rainwater discharge into an open container on loose blocks. Rear parapet at first-floor level, beside the terrace.	Remove the container, hose and loose blocks and make the parapet safe. Reinstall a permanent, properly bracketed downpipe connected to a gully or the surface water drainage. Confirm the receiving drainage first.	1	Immediate
1.02 RW2	Rainwater pipe cut short, discharging open-ended onto the wall, with saturation staining below. Rear passage at first-floor level.	Reinstall the missing length of downpipe on proper brackets, with correctly formed joints and a shoe, connected to a gully or the surface water drainage. Undertake with RW1.	1	Immediate
1.03 M5	Blown and delaminating render, locally overhanging, to the moulded bands and window heads at high level. Front elevation above the entrance approach.	Sound the render over its whole extent from an access platform and remove all loose and hollow material to a sound edge as a safety measure. Thereafter re-render in lime render, reinstating the moulded profile and a proper drip, and redecorate in a permeable coating.	1	Immediate
2.00	<u>PRIORITY 2 – SHORT TERM (0–12 MONTHS)</u>			
2.01 C1	Chimney flaunching cracked and eroded, with an open void adjacent to a pot. Main stack, rear slope.	Hack off and renew the flaunching in a lime-based or weak gauged mortar to a weathered profile with a drip, and re-bed the pots. Combine with C2, C3, L1 and A1 under one access installation.	2	0–12 months
2.02 C2	Horizontal fracture through the oversailing course with spalled brickwork below. Main stack, rear slope.	Cut out and replace spalled bricks, repoint the fractured course in lime mortar and reinstate the corbel detail. Arrange a hands-on inspection first to confirm extent and that nothing is loose.	2	0–12 months
2.03 L1	Chimney flashings patched and locally lifting from the chase. Main stack cheeks and gutters.	Inspect at close quarters; re-dress or renew lifted, split or inadequately lapped lead, wedged and pointed into a raked chase. Consider renewal as a complete run while access is in place.	2	0–12 months
2.04 L2	Raking abutment flashing loosely dressed and lifting. Closet-wing roof junction with the main rear wall.	Form a proper chase and renew the raking flashing in Code 4/5 lead in lengths not exceeding 1.5m, lapped, wedged and pointed. Execute together with M2.	2	0–12 months
2.05 M1	Established self-seeded vegetation rooted in the brickwork joints. Rear elevation at high level, left of the closet-wing abutment.	Cut back and treat with a systemic herbicide applied to the cut stem; remove roots once dead; rake out and repoint in lime mortar. Address the water source (RW1, RW2, M2) at the same time.	2	0–12 months
2.06 M2	Open recess and loss of brick and mortar above the roof abutment. Rear elevation above the closet-wing roof.	Cut out and rebuild in matching salvaged brick bonded to the existing work, repoint in lime mortar, and renew the flashing at L2 as a single co-ordinated repair. Allow a contingency for hidden loss.	2	0–12 months
2.07 R1	Mortar/cement patch repair mid-slope. Closet-wing roof, upper third.	Remove the patch and make a permanent repair with matching second-hand slate, fixed with copper nails or slate hooks. Undertake with R3.	2	0–12 months
2.08 R3	Slates locally out of course and standing proud. Closet-wing roof, central and right-hand portion.	Overhaul the slope from an access platform: re-fix or replace all slipped and lifted slates. Allow for more slates to prove loose once handled, and review the case for re-covering if nail sickness proves widespread.	2	0–12 months
2.09 R5	Organic debris in abutments, parapet gutters and at the head of the lead bay roof. Rear roofs generally.	Thorough clearance of all abutments, gutters, valleys and outlets, and inspection of the leadwork beneath. Thereafter clear at least twice yearly.	2	0–12 months

HAMPSTEAD CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Roof and high-level condition survey

ANONYMISED SAMPLE | London N8 | Original report pagination retained

Item	Defect and location	Recommended action	Priority	Timing
2.10 F2	Decayed timber packer at the rooflight kerb; sealant-dependent weathering. Rooflight to the rear flat roof.	Remove the packer; have the kerb, upstand and weathering examined at close quarters and the detail properly reformed; renew the metal weathering if split or inadequately lapped.	2	0–12 months
2.11 RW3	Two soil/waste pipe joints wrapped in adhesive tape and bandage. Rear passage at eaves level.	Open up and permanently repair or renew the affected joints and, if the run proves generally defective, renew it. Establish which service each pipe carries first. Do not re-tape.	2	0–12 months
2.12 RW4	Waste branch and trap lying directly on the roof covering. Rear flat roof at the abutment.	Install the pipework properly on supports clear of the covering, correctly falling, and inspect and repair the covering beneath when it is lifted.	2	0–12 months
2.13 RW5	Gutter angle obstructed by leaves and vegetation, with overflow staining below. Front bay gutter, right-hand angle.	Clear the gutter along its full length, inspect and, if open, re-make the angle joint; check and adjust falls. Inspect the fascia and eaves timbers behind for decay. Then clear twice yearly.	2	0–12 months
2.14 RW7	Gullies silted and partially obstructed by leaf litter. Side and rear passages.	Clear all gullies and gratings, cut back adjacent vegetation, and confirm external levels remain below the damp-proof course. Include in the twice-yearly regime.	2	0–12 months
2.15 M6	Saturation staining and salt deposition to render and masonry below defective rainwater goods. Rear and side passages.	Cure the source (RW1, RW2, RW6) first, allow the wall not less than three months to dry, then make good pointing and spalled brickwork and redecorate in a permeable coating. Apply no waterproof or sealing treatment.	2	After RW1/RW2
3.00	<u>PRIORITY 3 – MEDIUM TERM (1–3 YEARS)</u>			
3.01 C3	Open and eroded mortar joints, with hard cement patches. Principal chimney stack.	Rake out to twice the joint width and repoint in lime mortar to match the original profile, cutting out the hard cement patches. Combine with C1 and C2.	3	1–3 years
3.02 R7	Ridge and hip tiles and their bedding not fully inspected – obscured by tree canopy and flight angle. Main roof slopes.	Examine and test the ridge and hip bedding at close quarters when access is next in place; rake out and repoint any open or hollow bedding and re-bed any loose unit. Tender with C1–C3 and R3.	3	1–3 years
3.03 L3	Loose redundant metal cover laid over the slope. Slope adjoining the main stack.	Remove the sheet, establish the nature of the opening beneath and make a permanent repair – re-slate if redundant, or fit a purpose-made lead slate if the penetration remains in use.	3	1–3 years
3.04 L4	Open junction between the lead apron and the render. Rear elevation, window head.	Rake out and reform the junction with the lead upstand properly turned and the render cut back to throw water clear. Test the surrounding render by tapping. A sealant-only repair is not adequate.	3	1–3 years
3.05 M3	Widespread erosion of mortar joints, with failing soft repointing locally. Flank and rear elevations.	Programme repointing over the medium term in lime mortar, prioritising the deepest erosion, the areas beneath defective rainwater goods and the high-level areas where access is required anyway. Replace defective bricks as work proceeds.	3	1–3 years
3.06 M4	Open joints to the brick creasing course beneath the bay gutter. Front elevation, both angles.	Repoint the creasing course in lime mortar and replace any brick whose face has been lost – after, not before, the gutter repair at RW5.	3	1–3 years
3.07 M7	Open coping joints with organic growth; a displaced weathering detail at high level. Parapets generally.	Rake out and repoint the coping joints in lime mortar as part of M3, remove growth, check each coping for movement and re-bed any found loose.	3	1–3 years
3.08 F1	Flat roof covering weathered, surface finish locally lost, falls appear shallow. Rear flat roof / terrace.	Bring within a planned maintenance regime with annual inspection and prompt local repair. Take a core sample to establish the build-up before any decision on renewal. Anticipate and plan for renewal rather than deferring it indefinitely; see Section 1.7 as to responsibility.	3	1–3 years (renew 3–5)
3.09 F3	Localised patch repair and surface crazing to the deck. Rear flat roof, beyond the rooflight and at the abutment.	Examine at close quarters and locally repair any open crack using a system compatible with the existing covering. Record and monitor both areas.	3	1–3 years

HAMPSTEAD CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Roof and high-level condition survey

ANONYMISED SAMPLE | London N8 | Original report pagination retained

Item	Defect and location	Recommended action	Priority	Timing
3.10 F4	Debris at the head of the covering, encroaching vegetation, generous bay widths. Lead-covered bay roof.	Clear debris and cut back vegetation with R5; inspect the welts, rolls, head detail and drips at close quarters and record the bay dimensions. No renewal indicated.	3	1–3 years
3.11 E1	Eaves boarding bare of paint, with open joints and a gap at the soffit/wall junction. Rear passage eaves.	Fill open joints, splice out any decay, prime and fully redecorate. Close the soffit/wall gap with a fitted closer to prevent vermin entry. Probe for decay at the time of the works.	3	1–3 years
3.12 E2	Staining and local decoration breakdown to the painted cornice and bargeboards. Front bay and rear eaves.	Cure RW5 first, then prepare and fully redecorate the eaves joinery, splicing out any soft timber. Thereafter redecorate on a five-year cycle.	3	1–3 years
3.13 A1	Redundant aerial masts, brackets and loose cabling fixed to the stack, parapet and rear elevation.	Remove all redundant equipment and cabling and make good the fixing holes in lime mortar; check and re-fix equipment still in use, preferably to a bracket independent of the stack. Undertake with C1–C3.	3	1–3 years
3.14 A2	Penetration flashings to soil vent and flue terminals not closely inspected; open flues and unprotected vents.	Examine each penetration flashing and lead slate when access is in place and re-dress or renew as required. Fit vermin and rain guards to open terminals, and cap disused flues with a ventilated cowl only.	3	1–3 years
3.15 RW6	Rainwater goods weathered, decorations thin, debris at outlets, pipes fixed hard to the wall. All elevations.	Clear all gutters, outlets and hoppers twice yearly; redecorate cast iron on a five-year cycle; fit distance pieces where pipes are fixed hard to the wall. Observe the system during heavy rain to identify leaking joints.	3	1–3 years
4.00	<u>PRIORITY 4 – ROUTINE / PLANNED MAINTENANCE</u>			
4.01 R2	Non-matching earlier replacement slates. Closet-wing roof, left-hand third.	No action required on account of appearance alone. Recorded as evidence of a history of localised failure to this slope.	4	No action
4.02 R4	Moss and lichen colonisation to the slate slopes generally.	Remove growth carefully by hand or soft brush whenever access is in place. Do not use high-pressure washing on slate.	4	Ongoing
4.03 R6	Main rear slate slope and dormer – no defect identified.	No action beyond periodic visual inspection and inclusion in the clearance regime. Re-inspect at high level in three to five years, or sooner if ingress is reported.	4	3–5 years
4.04 A3	Rooflights – no defect identified to the units themselves.	Periodic cleaning and inspection of the perimeter seal. Repair the kerb detail at F2.	4	Ongoing
4.05 I1	Historic staining to the ceiling and cornice; meter readings low. Ground-floor flat, living room.	Do not open up at this stage. Mark and date the margin of the stain, photograph it, and re-inspect after sustained driving rain. If it extends, follow the investigation sequence at Section 13.0.	4	Monitor
4.06 I2	Earlier plaster repair at the wall/ceiling junction; meter readings low. Ground-floor flat, bedroom.	Monitor as I1. Establish, if possible, what this repair was carried out to address, as that would materially assist if the problem recurs.	4	Monitor
4.07 I3	Bathroom and remaining accommodation inspected – readings normal, no defect identified.	No action required. Check that the bathroom extract ventilation operates effectively and discharges to the outside air.	4	No action

No costs are given. The extent of several items cannot be established until the close inspections recommended at Section 13.0 have been carried out, and any budget prepared before then would be unreliable. Priorities reflect technical urgency only and take no account of the apportionment of repairing liability or of cost – see Section 1.7.