



Sample report: fictional property. Details changed. Not a real property.

SAMPLE REPORT EXCERPT

RICS Level 3 Building Survey

Sample property: 1930s three-bedroom semi-detached house with a rear single-storey extension, North West London

This excerpt shows how a JBS Level 3 report reads: a condition rating for each element, what it is and how it is built, the likely cause of any defect, the probable repair and what further investigation should cover. It reproduces the overall opinion, a selection of elements and the closing sections. The full sample, at Level 2, Level 2 Plus and Level 3, is at jbs-surveying.co.uk/sample-reports.

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Condition ratings

- 3** Defects that are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently
- 2** Defects that need repairing or replacing but are not considered to be either serious or urgent
- 1** No repair is currently needed. The property must be maintained in the normal way
- NI** Not inspected

Sample report: fictional property. The wording is based on typical JBS reports; the property and every detail are invented and do not describe a real home.

B. Overall opinion

This is a well-proportioned inter-war house that has been extended and updated over time. It is in fair condition for its age. There are two items that need attention soon: the roof coverings (D2) and the electrics (F1). The drainage (F6) and the support to the retained chimney breast (E3) should be investigated before you exchange contracts.

Most of the other matters are normal maintenance for a house of this age. Provided you obtain quotations for the urgent items and the legal matters are resolved satisfactorily, we see no reason why you should not proceed.

Budget for the roof and electrical work before you commit, as both are best done before you move in and both can disturb finishes. The investigations recommended will either close the matter or give you a firm scope to negotiate on.

Summary of condition ratings (whole report)

3 Condition rating 3

D2 Roof coverings, F1 Electricity

2 Condition rating 2

D1 Chimney stacks, D3 Rainwater pipes and gutters, D4 Main walls, D5 Windows, D8 Joinery and finishes, E1 Roof structure, E3 Walls and partitions, E5 Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues, E8 Bathroom fittings, F3 Water, F4 Heating, F6 Drainage, G3 Boundaries

1 Condition rating 1

D6 Outside doors, E2 Ceilings, E4 Floors, E7 Woodwork, F2 Gas and oil, G4 Grounds

NI Not inspected

G2 Garden shed

C. About the property

A two-storey semi-detached house of the inter-war period, with a hipped main roof, a shared chimney stack, a rendered bay to the front and a later flat-roofed kitchen extension to the rear. Freehold is assumed. The property was occupied and furnished at the time of the inspection and the weather was dry.

Ground floor: entrance hall, front reception room, rear reception room, kitchen in the rear extension, cloakroom. First floor: landing, three bedrooms, bathroom. Outside: front garden with paved parking, rear garden with a timber shed.

D. Outside the property (selected elements)

D2 Roof coverings

3

The main roof is pitched and covered with concrete interlocking tiles, a later replacement of the original covering. Several tiles have slipped or are cracked, and the mortar bedding to the hip and ridge tiles is loose and missing in places. Water staining was seen within the roof space below the defective areas (see E1). The flat roof over the rear extension is covered in mineral felt, which is aged, with blistering and ponding water near the outlet. Repairs are needed now to keep the property weathertight; obtain quotations from a roofing contractor before you exchange contracts.

CONSTRUCTION AND CONTEXT

Concrete interlocking tiles are common on re-roofed inter-war houses. They are durable, but they are heavier than the clay tiles they often replace, and the roof structure should be able to carry the extra weight (see E1). Hip and ridge tiles on older roofs are usually bedded in mortar, which weathers over time and is a frequent source of leaks. Felt flat roofs have a shorter life than pitched roofs, and ponding water shortens it further.

CAUSE AND LIKELY REPAIR

The slipped tiles appear to result from failed nail fixings and wind lifting, and the loose ridge and hip tiles from weathered mortar bedding. The staining in the roof space shows water has already been getting in. The likely repair to the main roof is to refix or replace the slipped and cracked tiles, rebed or mechanically fix the hips and ridge (a dry-fix system is now common), and check the underlay where tiles are removed. The extension roof is near the end of its useful life and is likely to need re-covering rather than patching; ask the contractor to check the deck for softness and to improve the falls so water drains to the outlet. Because repairs at height need scaffolding, obtain at least two quotations for the complete scope before you exchange.

E. Inside the property (selected elements)

E1 Roof structure

2

The roof space was entered through the hatch on the landing. The roof is a traditional cut-timber structure. Water staining was seen on the timbers and underlay below the defective tiles noted in D2, and the loft insulation is thin. The timbers seen were in reasonable condition. The roof repairs in D2 are needed to stop the water getting in, and insulation should be increased.

CONSTRUCTION AND CONTEXT

Roofs of this period were built on site from sawn timbers: rafters, purlins supporting the rafters mid-span, and struts down to the internal walls. When a lighter original covering is replaced with heavier concrete tiles, the structure can deflect over time unless it was strengthened when the tiles were changed.

CAUSE AND LIKELY REPAIR

The staining appears to be from recent and historic leaks at the slipped tiles and ridge; the timbers seen were dry at the time and no significant decay was found, but areas hidden by insulation and stored items could not be checked. There is slight deflection to one roof slope, which is common after re-roofing with heavier tiles, with no signs of recent movement. The likely scope is to repair the roof covering, check the timbers once the covering is opened up, and top up the insulation while keeping the eaves ventilated to avoid condensation.

F. Services (selected elements)

F1 Electricity

3

Mains electricity is connected. The consumer unit (fuse box) is an older type without residual current device (RCD) protection, and some older cabling and sockets were seen. There is no evidence of a recent test. For safety, the whole installation should be tested by a registered electrician and an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) obtained before you exchange contracts.

CONSTRUCTION AND CONTEXT

The consumer unit is the main control point for the electrics. Modern installations include RCD protection, which cuts the power quickly if there is a fault and reduces the risk of electric shock and fire. Current guidance is that installations are tested at least every ten years and on a change of occupier.

CAUSE AND LIKELY REPAIR

The absence of RCD protection and the age of parts of the wiring indicate an installation that has been added to over time rather than rewired as a whole. An EICR will show what is needed. The likely outcome ranges from replacing the consumer unit and remedying individual circuits to a partial or full rewire; a rewire involves lifting floorboards and making good plaster, so it is much easier to do before you move in.

F6 Drainage

2

Drainage is assumed to connect to the public sewer, shared with the adjoining house. The inspection chamber cover in the side passage was lifted: there was a build-up of debris and signs of water backing up. A CCTV drainage survey is recommended before you exchange contracts.

CONSTRUCTION AND CONTEXT

Below-ground drains in houses of this age are often clay pipes with mortar joints. Tree roots, ground movement and age can cause cracks and displaced joints, which lead to blockages and leaks into the ground.

CAUSE, REPAIR AND FURTHER INVESTIGATION

The debris and staining in the chamber suggest a partial blockage or a defect further along the run. Leaking drains on clay subsoil can soften the ground and contribute to movement, so this should be investigated rather than simply cleared. A CCTV survey will show the condition of the pipes and whether repair or lining is needed. Your legal adviser should confirm responsibilities for the shared section.

G. Grounds (selected elements)

G2 Garden shed

NI

There is a timber shed at the end of the rear garden. It was locked and full of stored items at the time of the inspection, so it was not inspected. Ask the seller for access, or about its condition, before you exchange contracts.

CONSTRUCTION AND CONTEXT

NI means not inspected. Where part of a property cannot be seen, the report says so rather than guessing: it is not a clean bill of health.

CAUSE AND LIKELY REPAIR

If the shed has an electricity supply, it should be included in the electrical test recommended at F1.

H. Issues for your legal advisers

H1 Tenure

The property is assumed to be freehold. Your legal adviser should confirm this.

H2 Planning and Building Regulations

Your legal adviser should obtain the planning position and building control completion certificates for the rear extension, the chimney breast removal (see E3) and the replacement windows and doors.

H5 Guarantees

Ask for any guarantees for the roof, the replacement windows and any damp-proofing work, and check that they can be transferred to you.

H6 Other matters

Confirm the responsibilities for the shared chimney stack and the shared drainage, and ownership of the boundaries.

I. Risks

I1 Risks to the building

- Water getting in through the roof coverings (D2, E1).
- The area has shrinkable clay subsoil and there is a mature tree nearby. No significant movement was seen, but the risk of seasonal movement should be kept in mind, drains kept in good repair and any new cracking monitored (D4, F6).

Clay subsoil moves with its moisture content. Trees draw moisture from the ground, and leaking drains soften it, which is why the drainage investigation matters. Your insurer will ask about trees and past movement; answer accurately.

I3 Risks to people

- The electrical installation (F1).
- Possible lead water supply pipe (F3).
- The textured ceiling coating in the bathroom may contain asbestos. It is low risk if left undisturbed; have it tested before any work (E2).
- Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms were not seen; fit them before you move in.

The staircase balustrade has wider gaps between the spindles than current guidance recommends for homes with small children (E7).

K. What to do now

1. Before you exchange contracts, obtain quotations for the roof repairs (D2) and an Electrical Installation Condition Report and quotation for any remedial work (F1).
2. Commission a CCTV drainage survey (F6).
3. Ask your legal adviser for building control and structural details for the chimney breast removal; if these are not available, have a structural engineer inspect (E3). We can recommend one.
4. Pass sections H and I to your legal adviser.
5. Have the boiler serviced and a gas safety check carried out when you move in (F2, F4).

How to instruct JBS

A Level 3 Building Survey is from £699 for a property valued up to £500,000, the full fee including all taxes and fees. Fees rise in steps with property value and can be higher for large, listed, altered or non-standard properties. Every quote is confirmed in writing before you instruct, and payment is required before the inspection.

Level 3 reports are typically issued within 7 working days of the inspection. Every survey includes a call with Joe to go through the report, in weekday slots between 4pm and 6pm.

Call 020 7088 8125

Email enquiries@jbs-surveying.co.uk

Fees and quotes jbs-surveying.co.uk/fees

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