BUILDING SURVEYORS

REPORT UPON

EWINS HILL FARMHOUSE, ALDBOURNE

FOR

MR R BAILEY

EWINS HILL FARM, MARLBOROUGH,

SN9 2LA

DOLMAN
Tel: 01380 729456
Email: info@dolmansurveyors.co.uk
30 October 2023

1.0 BRIEF

1.1 To undertake a Building Surveyors Inspection and report upon the property notably its structural and habitable condition, all in respect of a Planning Permission Application for a temporary static caravan.

2.0 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

2.1 A detached early 1900's chalet style dwelling with attached Barn / garaging / Stores set within overgrown garden, adjoining a farmyard.

2.2 The dwelling is enclosed upon by overgrown shrubs and mature trees to the north, east and south, recent clearance of undergrowth to the north and east provides for closer inspection.

2.3 The dwelling has pitched roofs covered with natural slate, clay and concrete tiles, corrugated steel sheeting, upon brick and flint and timber stud walling. Windows and external doors are a mixture of painted timber, metal (Critall) and upvc).

2.4 The structural integrity and condition of the dwelling, barn / garage / stores and garden is poor and unhabitable.

3.0 SCOPE OF THE SURVEY

3.1 The scope of the Survey is as agreed in Dolman's fee proposal email dated 11 October 2023 and confirmed in Client's email of 12 October 2023.

3.2 The Survey was carried out on Thursday 19 October 2023, the weather was overcast and temperature approximately 15°C.

3.3 The Survey was carried out by Mr N J Dolman BSc MRICS (Chartered Building Surveyor).

SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION

Ground Floor

- ❒ Entrance Hall
- ❒ Office
- ❒ Kitchen (stairwell and front lobby off)
- ❒ Sitting room
- ❒ Sun room
- ❒ Bedroom 2
- ❒ Bathroom
- ❒ Bedroom 1

1st Floor

- ❒ Bedroom 3
- ❒ Loft space 1 north
- ❒ Loft space 2 south

Externally

- ❑ Garage / Barn / Stores attached to the north of the dwelling

Orientation

- ❑ The Highway, Ewins Hill Lane is to the south of the property running east / west.

THE REPORT OBSERVATIONS

1.0 ***General overview***

Originally a two room single storey dwelling consisting of Kitchen and Dining room with loft above extended to the west (Office) and east (Living room and Bedroom 2). Extended further to the north for Bedroom 1 and Bathroom.

The use of the loft space for habitable use is a more recent alteration.

2.0 ***External walls***

2.1 A mixture of solid 100, 225 and 340mm brick and brick and flint walls all with cementitious mortar. Damp proof courses are present to part only.

2.2 The western gable has been rebuilt in the past 20 – 40 years with blockwork apparent internally the wall is not braced and leans inwards with the ground floor arched lintels opening up vertically indicating loss of tie between block and brick leafs.

2.3 The southern roadside wall is braced by two brick piers with the wall showing a noticeable outward lean externally, vertical crack internally (Office / Kitchen wall junction) and bulge to roof alignment. The roof structure at this location has been modified and has had a loss of horizontal tie reaction at roof / wall plate position. (See further below item 8.1 relating to roof truss adaptation.)

2.4 To the east the sun room abutment to the Sitting room / Bedroom 2 shows settlement of the entire structure with movement away from the adjoining wall, gaps of 10 – 15mm are clearly evident at upper heights, the corner lintel abutment has also settled. Whilst the adjacent tree is the obvious cause (roots drying the ground) the structure itself is economic consisting of 100 and 225mm wall thickness.

2.5 The external walls provide no thermal insulation beyond their base clay / concrete material, linings internally consist of cement render and plaster skim, plasterboard upon battens, hardboard and wallpaper, plywood and wallpaper.

2.6 Damp rises where damp proof courses are not present and penetrates through the walls at west and part north east and north west.

2.7 The gable wall of the original structure towards the east is exposed horizontal timber boarding upon studwork – the boards are loose, weathered and lead flashing erroneously placed – laps are open to rain entry. A matching feature is visible internally at loft level (above the Office / Kitchen wall) to the west.

3.0 ***Roof structure and coverings***

3.1 The principle (higher roof) is covered with natural slate with 15 – 20% slipped / missing to south and north elevations.
Rooflights have been introduced to the south for the loft space use.
Extensive ivy growth is present across the north east and north west slopes with entry under the slates and coverings.
At loft level water leaks into the ceiling linings.

3.2 Slate also cover the part north east and eastern lower slopes.

3.3 The other roof slopes of clay plain tile, clay triple arris and concrete interlocking all are in reasonable alignment, but with moss, debris present.

3.4 Lead flashing detailing between lower and higher roof / wall abutments is poor and open to the weather.

3.5 Lead sloping valleys are full of debris with water ingress apparent internally. Lead lengths exceed that recommended by the LSA.

3.6 Large polycarbonate roof sheet (rooflight) to the Hall / passage area on the west rear slope is poorly detailed, leaking and 'very peculiar'.
Slates adjacent and in the areas of the chimney flue and west valley are damaged and missing.

3.7 The galvanised corrugated steel lies at a very shallow pitch, it's rusting, water enters internally.

3.8 The brick chimney serves two fireplaces, buddleia grows from the top, bricks are missing and weathered to the NE, mortar joints are open and weathered.

3.9 Rainwater goods are, where present, full of debris and misaligned. Downpipes (where present) are blocked and discharge to ground not to drains.

4.0 ***Windows and external doors***

4.1 The upvc frames are serviceable.

4.2 The timber frames and door are in very poor condition to the point of failing.

4.3 The metal Critall frames are rusting and in poor decorative condition, some glass is broken.

5.0 ***Internally***

5.1 Ceilings are of plywood, hardboard, fibreboard and a little plasterboard. They are in poor condition with heavy condensation mould, water leaks and inadequate fixings evident.
Fire compartmentation and protection from surface spread of flames is non-existent – particularly below the 1st floor rooms.

5.2 Wall finishes are of plaster, plywood, hardboard often with woodchip papers. They are in poor condition with condensation mould, rising damp degradation and penetrating damp evident.
Fire compartmentation and surface spready of flame protection is lacking to about 70% of the internal walls.

5.3 Floor finishes, ignoring the soiled carpets and vinyl, the concrete floors appear level and serviceable (Office, corridor, bath, Bedroom 1) elsewhere the Kitchen and Dining room floors are uneven and lumpy – brick / flags are suspected. They were not exposed due to the excessive amount of furniture, chattels and personal effects (spread throughout the property).
The suspended timber floor of Living room and Bedroom 2 have woodworm (common furniture beetle) present with slight bounce to the structure at NE and SE (corners) indicating rotten joists / plates.

6.0 ***Services***

6.1 Electric – the installation is visually poor with worrying signs of DIY intervention and damage at the distribution board. The installation is not safe to use.

6.2 Plumbing / sanitary ware / hot and cold – the installations are soiled, basic and dated. No water was running. There is little to commend.

6.3 Heating – some radiators are present with an oil boiler the source of heating – visually the arrangement of piping and condition of the fittings is poor.

6.4 Kitchen units – very basic, unsanitary and of poor quality and condition.

7.0 ***Internal doors*** - a mixture of panelled, flush and part glazed – all are affected by damp and require easing. Ironmongery where present is poor.

8.0 ***First floor*** - the ground floor ceiling joists have been upgraded to floor joists, no ceiling lining to part, the stairs are a ladder / stair arrangement with no effective balustrade.

8.1 The central truss has been cut to provide access, causing loss of tie to the structure, there is no thermal insulation, the ceiling linings are unfinished hardboard, plasterboard and plywood.

8.2 The roof structure that is visible at east and west is poorly supported (rafters, purlins and undersized props / braces).

8.3 The entire arrangement and adaptation of the former loft space is of poor quality workmanship and ineffective design – it presents a worrying sight.

9.0 ***The adjacent Barn / garage / stores*** are structurally poor, of incomplete construction and in poor weatherable condition.

10.0 ***Summary***

10.1 This modest dwelling and adjacent Barn / garage / stores are examples of a rogue builder or DIY enthusiast having carried out a range of alterations / extension and adaptations.

10.2 The workmanship is of poor quality, the materials used erroneous and little thought given to effective and legitimate design.

10.3 The works and age have combined to cause structural failure of roof, walls, and failure of most windows and doors.

10.4 Aged plight and weathering have resulted in a Building of extremely poor condition.

10.5 The structural failure, the aged plight and weathering all combine to give reasonable justification that the Buildings are not structurally sound nor suitable for human habitation, demolition is strongly recommended.