Report on the Visual Inspection

of

Single Storey Ancillary building

at

The Old Vicarage, Dursley Road,

Heywood, Wiltshire, BA13 4LG

31st October 2023





INDIES STRUCTURES
Consulting Structural Engineers
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1 Introduction

1.1 Indies Structures received instructions from PMJ Planning Services to prepare a structural report for an ancillary building situated to the southwest of The Old Vicarage, Dursley Road, Heywood, Wiltshire, BA13 4LG. The purpose of this report was to evaluate the structural condition of the building, identify any structural defects, and assess its suitability for conversion into a habitable dwelling.

1.2 The primary objective of this report is to provide an assessment of the structural condition of the ancillary building and to gain an understanding of its construction through visual inspection.

1.3 The visual inspection was conducted by Indies Structures. A limited number of photographs were taken, and these are presented in Appendix A. External elevations were surveyed from ground level, and where necessary, a camera was used to aid in the inspection. Internal spaces were inspected from floor level.

1.4 It's important to note that only a visual inspection was performed, and no concealed details were exposed during this process. Consequently, any hidden defects and their potential consequences are not covered in this report. Furthermore, our professional indemnity insurers require us to state that we have not inspected concealed or inaccessible parts of the structure, and therefore, we cannot confirm their condition.

1.5 This report is intended solely for the private and confidential use of our client, PMJ Planning Services, and their professional advisors. The content of this report should not be reproduced or relied upon by third parties without the explicit consent of Indies Structures.

If having read this report you have comments or questions, please contact us to discuss.

The details of the inspection are included in the table below.

Engineer's name	Linroy Toney MEng CEng MICE
Weather conditions on the day of inspection	Dry & Cloudy
Address of the property inspected	The Old Vicarage, Dursley Road, Heywood, Wiltshire, BA13 4LG
Property status during the inspection	The property was vacant

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2 Report Limitations

2.1 This report is primarily based on a limited visual inspection conducted from ground level, focusing on the visible elements of the structure's general condition. Additionally, a cursory inspection of the elevations was performed from ground level.

2.2 It is important to emphasize that this report explicitly states that we did not inspect the foundations or other parts of the structure that were concealed, unexposed, or inaccessible. Therefore, we cannot confirm the condition of such hidden elements.

2.3 The inspection was further constrained by the inability to access the foundations during the visit. Additionally, due to safety considerations, it was not feasible to gain a close and comprehensive view of the entire roof structure. A walkover of the grounds around and alongside the property was conducted from ground level.

2.4 During the visit, no non-destructive or destructive tests or samples were taken. As-built records were not made available or known to exist, and the full elevations could not be inspected or reviewed due to the presence of render on the external walls of the property.

2.5 All comments included in this report are strictly limited to and based solely on the results of the visual inspection, record photographs, and our knowledge of similar structures constructed using similar materials of comparable age.

2.6 This report is intended exclusively for the private and confidential use of the client and should not be reproduced in whole or in part or relied upon by third parties for any purpose without the express written consent of Indies Structures.

2.7 It is important to note that this report does not guarantee that any previous work performed on the structure complied with statutory and mandatory regulations, British Standards, Codes of Practice, or any relevant standards in effect at that time. For a comprehensive explanation of the report's limitations, please refer to Appendix B.

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3 Observations

3.1 Weather Conditions and Survey Details

3.2 The inspection was conducted by Indies Structures. The weather was dry with clear skies. This favourable weather condition ensured excellent visibility.

3.3 Our inspection of the property was primarily focused on visible areas accessible from the ground floor level. For reference, a limited digital photographic record is included in Appendix A.

4 Description of the Property

4.1 The single-story ancillary building is situated to the southwest of the Old Vicarage on Dursley Road, Heywood, and is currently unoccupied.

4.2 While the precise age of the building could not be verified, it is estimated to be over 50 years old.

4.3 The structure is constructed with a timber frame, and both the external walls and the roof are covered with corrugated metal cladding.

4.4 The floor is comprised of suspended timber joists that are supported by masonry piers and sleeper walls. These supports are spaced along the perimeter walls and at the mid-span of the building.

4.5 Detailed descriptions of the external envelope structure and internal structures are provided in Section 7 of this report.

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5 Ground Conditions and Foundations

5.1 No original Site Investigation (SI) Report or "as-built" records were made accessible for review.

5.2 Information retrieved from the BGS website reveals details of a borehole record located within 550 meters of the site. According to this data, the underlying geology is expected to consist of superficial deposits of Oxford Clay formation overlaying Mudstone bedrock formations.

6 General condition summary

6.1 During the inspection, indications of dampness were observed on the floor slab, likely attributable to the compromised roof. Additionally, in certain areas, the absence of floorboards was evident, possibly due to timber decay.

6.2 It's important to note that we did not expose the property's foundations; nevertheless, visual evidence suggested defects in the masonry supporting the wall or foundation, which have had an impact on the structure's stability.

6.3 The roof is currently covered with corrugated metal sheeting that is in a state of disrepair. Extensive corrosion and dislodged sheeting were evident.

6.4 Timber decay was identified on the timber cladding covering the soffit of the vaulted ceiling, likely stemming from moisture ingress through the roof. A comprehensive inspection of the roof will be necessary to confirm the condition of the timber members throughout.

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7 Discussion

7.1 The visual inspection was conducted exclusively from ground level, with no specialised access equipment used.

7.2 It's worth noting that, on the day of the inspection, the weather was dry. Consequently, there were no recent signs of water ingress that could be observed.

7.3 While we did not excavate the foundations of the property, there were visible indications of defects in the masonry that supports the wall and foundation, which have had an adverse impact on the structure's stability.

7.4 Noticeable signs of movement were evident in the brick foundation, which appeared to have eroded, with bricks suspended above ground level.

7.5 The internal measurements of the building were determined to be 9.95 meters in length, 4.165 meters in width, and 3.05 meters in height to the underside of the ridge.

7.6 The ancillary building is constructed with a timber frame, featuring timber wall panels covered in corrugated metal cladding. The roof is supported by three timber A-frames evenly spaced along the building's length, with steel collar ties at the midspan providing lateral stability.

7.7 The floor of the building is constructed using suspended timber joists, which are supported on masonry piers. Visual indications of decay were observed on the wall panels and the floorboards/joists.

7.8 The building is elevated 300mm above ground level, with a concrete sub-base layer beneath its footprint. There are signs of ground settlement beneath the building's footprint.

7.9 The roof is covered with corrugated metal sheeting that is in a state of disrepair, displaying significant corrosion and dislodged sheeting.

7.10 The roof sheeting appears to be supported by timber rafters that span between the timber A-frames. These rafters are assumed to be affixed to timber frames within the front and rear elevation wall panels.

7.11 Timber decay was identified on the timber cladding covering the soffit of the vaulted ceiling, likely due to moisture ingress from the roof. A comprehensive roof inspection will be necessary to confirm the condition of the timber members throughout.

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7.12 Dampness was observed on the floor slab, likely attributable to the compromised roof. Additionally, there were areas where floorboards were missing, possibly due to timber decay.

7.13 The windows are in poor condition, displaying obvious signs of timber decay on the timber frames and reveal.

7.14 Longitudinal stability is maintained by steel collar ties located at midspan, which are linked to the timber A-frame. No inspection was conducted on the side panels to determine the presence of any stability systems.

7.15 The extent of the existing foundations was not directly investigated. However, the structure exhibits signs of distress due to ground settlement, rendering it unstable. To support the building, existing masonry foundations will require underpinning if the structure is to be converted.

8 Conclusion

8.1 The ancillary building is in a state of disrepair, and evident defects are observed in the timber frame and the roof sheeting. These issues suggest that moisture ingress has adversely impacted the structure. Further assessment of all components comprising the roof and the floor structure is necessary to determine their capacity to support increased loads in compliance with current building regulations.

8.2 The building seems to be supported by masonry sleeper walls/piers constructed directly on the ground, with no apparent signs of conventional concrete foundations.

8.3 Notably, the sleeper wall on the front elevation has been built directly on the ground, leaving a 200mm gap between the underside of the wall and the ground. This condition is considered structurally unsound, compromising the building's integrity.

8.4 Given the current state of the building, it is our professional opinion that, without extensive remedial work, the ancillary building is structurally unsafe and ill-suited for conversion. This is due to the risk of overloading the existing structure, which would necessitate substantial reconstruction or reinforcement to make it suitable for conversion into a habitable single-story dwelling.

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Appendix A **Photographic Record**



Figure 1: Photo of the side elevation wall with vegetation growth along the rear elevation

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Figure 2: Photo of a single-storey building supported on masonry piers



Figure 3: Photo of vegetation growth to rear elevation walls and corrosion of roof sheeting



Figure 4: Photo of the front elevation wall of the building with decayed timber window frames



Figure 5: Photo of masonry piers supporting side elevation walls and floor

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Figure 6: Photo of defective foundations



Figure 7: Photo of void beneath a timber floor



Figure 8: Photo of timber A-frame braced by steel collar ties



Figure 9: Photo of moisture staining to vaulted ceiling



Figure 10: Photo of moisture staining and decay to vaulted ceiling



Figure 11: Photo of decay to the vaulted ceiling due to moisture ingress from the roof



Figure 12: Photo of decayed ceiling cladding with exposed timber rafters



Figure 13: Photo of decayed floorboard exposing timber joists



Figure 14: Photo of masonry sleeper wall supporting floor joists



Figure 15: Photo of masonry pier supporting timber joists which shows signs of decay

Appendix B **Limitations**

1 The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the general condition of the structure as far as can be ascertained from a visual inspection.

2 In accomplishing this purpose, a visual inspection of the double-storey annexe (no inspection was undertaken of the main residence) was undertaken both internally and externally. The inspection was limited because no uncovering physical testing or intrusive ground investigation had been undertaken and the structural fabric was not fully exposed.

3 The diagnosis of the movement or damage is subject to further investigation(s) where required.

4 Reference in this report to the left and the right-hand means the following:-

a) Reference to the whole property when facing the front.
b) References to individual walls or elements, when facing the appropriate side of the wall or element.

5 We were authorised to confine our attention to structural matters and this document should not be construed as a comprehensive survey or cost/budget report. Special reference is made to the following:-

c) It was not possible to observe the foundations. The foundations of the main property were not inspected and we have referred to the work of others.
d) No opening up was done.
e) No non-destructive or destructive tests or samples were taken at the time of the visit. As such the fabric was not tested or assessed (e.g. steel for loss of section due to corrosion).
f) Existing records were not made available to show the layout of the building so all information is based on approximate measurements and what was visible. A limited photographic record was made.
g) At the time of the visual inspection, vegetation was growing against the wall which prevented inspection of some areas of the fabric.
h) Non-structural elements, such as windows, door joinery, fascias and soffits, and the like were not inspected.
i) The main property has not been inspected for building faults related to roof coverings, rainwater systems (gutters and rwps), gulleys/sumps/pumps, drains, or other defects. No CCTV survey was done.
j) In particular, we have not inspected or carried out physical testing on electrical, heating, or plumbing installations, below-ground drainage runs, or above-ground drainage runs, either internally or externally.
k) Fences/site boundary walls were not inspected.
l) We have not inspected timber or any other part of the structural fabric that was covered, concealed, or inaccessible, and we are therefore unable to report that any such part of the property is free from defect.

6 Comments contained within this report, therefore, are strictly limited to and based solely on, the visual evidence that is documented and our understanding of similar structures, built using similar materials and techniques of a similar age.

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