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Consulting Engineers

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Our Ref: B1908/MJL/cd

Your Ref: 23rd January 2013

Mr & Mrs D Graveston
Parkhouse Farm
Bolton-by-Bowland
Clitheroe
BB7 4LS

Dear Mr & Mrs Graveston

Re:- Parkhouse Farm, Clitheroe

Further to your instructions we have visited the above property in order to carry out a visual inspection and prepare a written report on the structural condition of the property.

The original building, we understand, dates back to the late 1600's/early 1700's with further extensions added some considerable time ago. The property is of conventional construction for its age and location and comprises random stone external walls, part solid/part suspended ground floor, suspended timber 1st floor and a slated, pitched roof.

External Inspection

Front Elevation

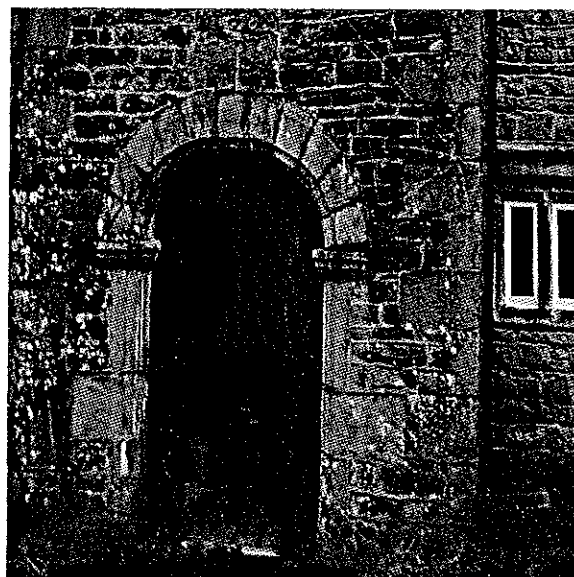
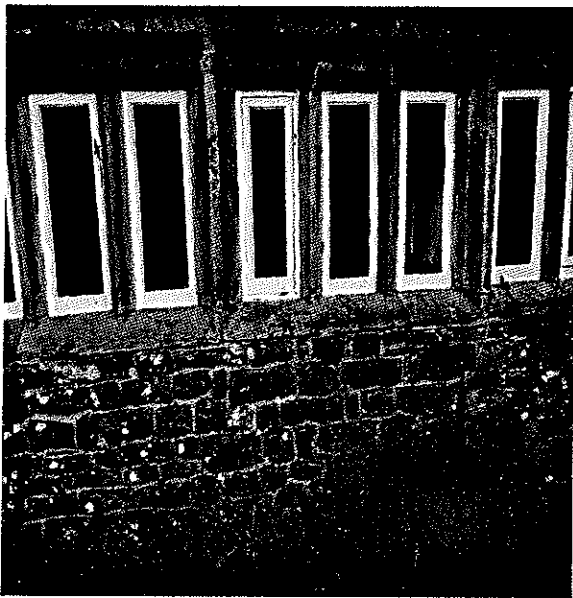
The front elevation contains an approximately central two storey entrance porch with the main external wall flanking either side as shown on photographs below.





320130294P

All the external walls were checked for vertical alignment using a 1.2metre long builder's spirit level and, whilst minor local undulations were noted in some areas, the overall alignments were found to be acceptably plumb. The horizontal alignment was similarly checked along the window cills and found to be acceptably level overall. Localised cracking was noted to the dressed stone window surrounds to the left hand side of the entrance porch at both ground and 1st floor levels together with some erosion evident to the stone window mullions. In addition the keystone to the stone arch to the entrance porch door has dropped.

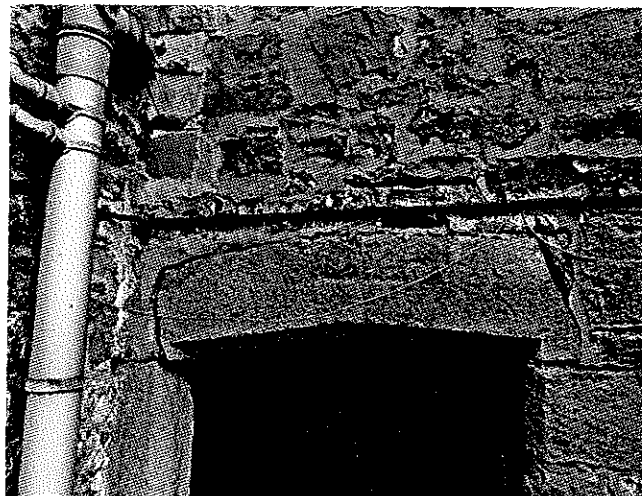


Gable Elevation

The gable elevation adjacent to the entrance drive was similarly checked and found to be acceptably plumb and level overall.



The stone lintel over the side entrance door was found to be cracked vertically at the left hand bearing with the wall.



Rear Elevation

The overall horizontal and vertical alignment of the rear elevation was found to be acceptably plumb, there was however evidence of lateral movement in the external corner of the wall adjacent to the staircase were outward movement of up to 20mm was noted around 1st floor level, there was however no evidence of any cracking in the external wall construction.

More significantly, similar lateral movement was noted at the right hand corner of this elevation with an accompanying large vertical crack adjacent to this corner generally following the junction of the quoins with the random stone wall.



320130294P



There was also evidence of joint cracking and erosion to the stone window surrounds at 1st floor level.

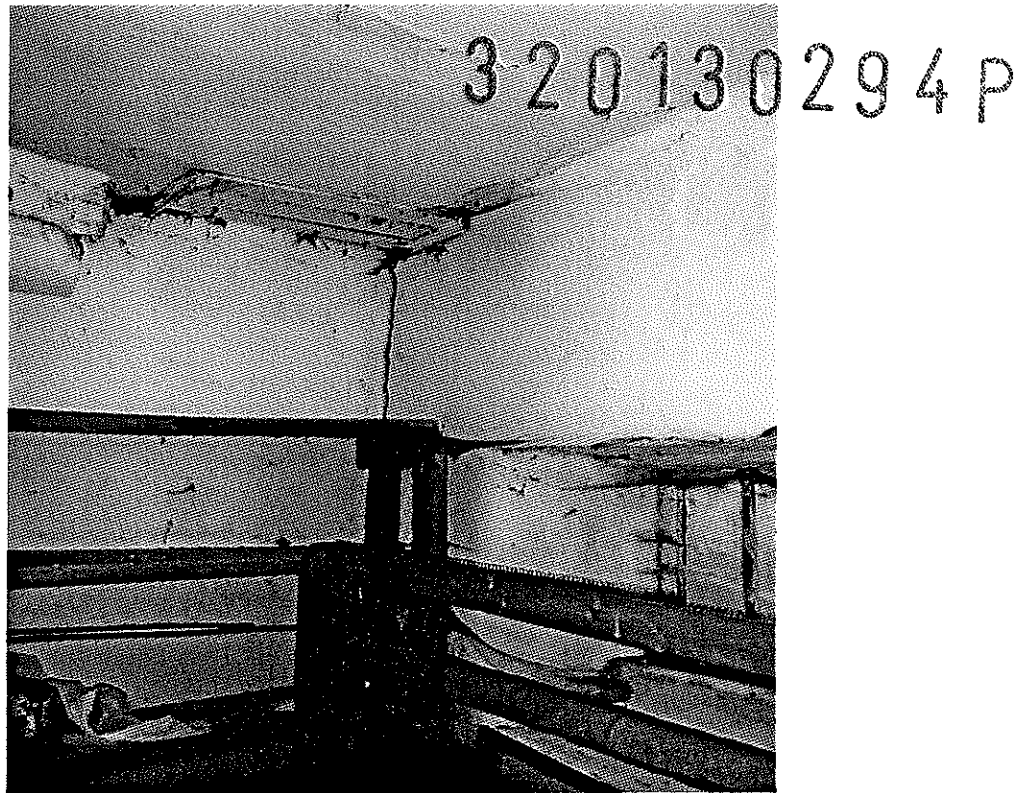


Rear Gable Elevation

The rear gable wall was checked for vertical and horizontal alignment and although minor local undulations were observed, was found to be in an acceptable condition overall.

Internal Inspection

An examination of the ground floor larder confirmed the vertical cracking observed externally on photograph 9 is repeated at the internal junction of the rear and rear gable walls.



There was also minor cracking evident around the bearings of timber beam in the same room.



The remaining areas at ground floor level were found to be generally satisfactory.

Similarly an inspection of the 1st floor areas revealed no evidence of significant concern although a localised opening up of the timber joint at the springing position was observed in a bowstring truss roof support.

Conclusions

320130294P

Whilst the overall condition of the property is considered to be adequate and commensurate with its age, the following areas give rise to concern:-

- 1) The cracked stone lintel to the side entrance door should be repaired/replaced.
- 2) The vertical crack noted on the rear elevation gable corner should be repaired using a "Helifix" system of reinforced bars or similar approved.
- 3) The movement noted to the keystone to the front porch arch would appear to be of a long-standing nature with no evidence of any recent movement. We do not consider that a repair is necessary at this moment in time, nevertheless we would recommend that this area is inspected at regular intervals to ensure no further movement is taking place.
- 4) We would offer similar comments with regard to the opening up of the joint in the bowstring truss at 1st floor level.

The joint cracking and erosion noted to the stone window surrounds on the external elevations are not strictly speaking a structural problem, nevertheless this deterioration in their condition will leave the external elevations prone to water ingress/damp penetration and will have to be dealt with eventually.

Yours sincerely



M. J. Lomax
Abbott & Lomax Ltd