



# Survey Report

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Arden House 210 Findhorn FORRES IV36 3YU

Report prepared for Mrs Lorna Ross

#### NL/AL/SCO5200

25 January 2023

Mrs L Ross Property Manager R&R Urquhart 117-121 High Street FORRES

PROPERTY ADDRESS

Arden House 210 Findhorn FORRES IV36 3YU

SURVEY DATE: 20 January 2023

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION: Traditional large detached dwellinghouse.

Weather conditions were cool but dry.

At the time of survey, the property inspected was un-occupied, partially furnished, and fully carpeted.

We would like to thank you for instructing us to inspect and report on this property. Our inspection has been confined to the areas detailed below and to the accessible areas only. If you require a more detailed inspection to these areas or to sections of the property out with the report, please let us know at your earliest convenience.

As per CDM regulations 2015, we understand our duties in carrying out this survey and have prepared a risk assessment and method statement for this to be carried out safely.

A general walk round survey was also carried out to the external elevations of the property.

Our brief was to inspect the main house only, for dampness, decay, and possible woodworm attack.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

In carrying out this inspection various meters and cameras were used to try and understand what has been occuring recently to the castle structure. They are the following:

- Protimeter Surveymaster moisture meter which is a dual mode moisture meter for sub-surface and surface moisture measuring.
- 4K mobile camera phone.

## MAIN ROOF VOID

## **OBSERVATIONS**

Access to this roof void was gained via the bathroom loft hatch.

A fairly limited inspection took place of the roof timbers due to the amount of glasswool insulation and small crawl space.



Where seen, the timbers were sound and dry with no obvious signs of any decay.

Our inspection revealed evidence of infestation by the common furniture beetle (Anobium punctatum). Around 75% of all woodworm damage is caused by this wood boring insect, with both softwoods and hardwoods being vulnerable to attack.

Old and apparently inactive infestations were evident to the accessible and exposed timbers. Treatments appear to have been carried out in the past and the client should therefore check for the availability and validity of any guarantees.

# **REAR ROOF VOID**

# **OBSERVATIONS**

Access to this roof void was gained by the hatch in the rear passageway.

The inspection took place by standing on the ladder. No access was gained to this roof void.

Where seen, the timbers were sound with no obvious signs of any decay.

Our inspection revealed evidence of infestation by the common furniture beetle (Anobium punctatum). Around 75% of all woodworm damage is caused by this wood boring insect, with both softwoods and hardwoods being vulnerable to attack.

Where seen, old and apparently inactive infestations were evident to the accessible and exposed timbers. There was one area that possible current infestations by the common furniture beetle were noted but it appeared fairly insignificant and wouldn't warrant treatments at this stage.

If necessary, this area could be monitored over the next flight season to ascertain if there is still activity within the timbers, so at this time, treatments would not be required.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

## FIRST FLOOR

A general walk round was carried out and various walls were tested with the Protimeter Surveymaster moisture meter. This is a dual mode moisture meter for subsurface and surface moisture measuring.

Readings can be taken in either search mode which is non-invasive and uses radio frequency or measure mode which is the more traditional pin method. The non-invasive method measures up to 20mm below the surface.

The meter was used in non-invasive search mode on the plaster to ascertain if it was damp below the surface. The readings in some areas were found to be high especially at the dormer slips but the majority were found to be within tolerances for the time of year, property construction and location. Any high areas appeared to be from salt contaminated plaster from previous water penetration. This salt is hygroscopic, in that it attracts moisture, even in the form of vapour. Unfortunately, these salts cannot be easily removed from the building materials and therefore any remedial works would necessitate the removal of the old plaster.

These walls and ceilings could be left until such times as when decoration next occurs, and any remedial works could then be carried out.

The meter readings are shown as wood moisture equivalent for non-conductive porous building materials, but it gives an indication, if problems exist.



Previous water penetration

Cracked plaster was evident on walls and ceilings but this appears to be historic.

## **GROUND LEVEL**

# **GENERAL OBSERVATIONS**

Most areas were covered with either carpet or ceramic floor tiles.

A small inspection of the sub-floors was carried out, from a floorboard in the front left room.

The solum was found to be bare earth/sand which is very common for Findhorn. This was found to be very dry with no sign of dampness to this area.



The wall plates were covered with debris and ideally could be cleared at some point in the future.

Some old water staining was noted to some ceilings, but this appears to be from a bath on the floor above. It appears this has leaked at some point in the past, but the plaster tested dry at this time. A plumber could check to make sure all pipework is sound.

Once again, some areas of salt contamination were noted to various walls but due to their age would not be unexpected.

I would imagine that any new owner would be looking to decorate the property and these areas could be addressed at that time.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

# FRONT PORCH



An area of dampness was noted to the lower levels, and this could be due to the type of construction. I would imagine some remedial repairs could be carried out by a local joiner to lower wall plates.

## EXTERNAL OBSERVATIONS

The roof was inspected from ground level and due to the location of the building, the roof line was hard to inspect from this level.

## <u>Slates</u>

Where seen, the slates appeared in line and in constant rows. No sign of slippage was noted but only the front elevation was checked.

## Leadwork

The lead seemed sound on the valleys and ridge and should have many more years of use. Depending on the original code used, lead can last up to 150 years. There were weeds in the rear valley however, that would need to be cleared.

# <u>Ridge</u>

The ridge appeared to be original clay sections and lead cover pieces. Where seen, only pointing works are required on the clay pieces and perhaps the lead fixings renailed.



## Chimneys and walls

All walls have been coated with a cement render which if the original sub-structure were blockwork would be fine but not if the structure is sandstone. The chimney stacks are sandstone so we would assume the property has been built the traditional way, with sandstone and lime mortar.

The walls appear to have a few cracks on the render on various locations but this would be expected if coated onto the sandstone as the cement is not flexible enough.

Ideally, at some point in the future, the original sections of the building requires to have the cement removed and repointed or recoated with a breathable render or coating. This would help the old building start to 'breathe' again.



There had been vines growing on the external walls which have now been removed. This will now allow more ventilation around the stonework and avoid possible roots penetrating the structure.

Any unused chimney cans should have ventilator caps fitted.

# External timbers

The timber soffit and facia boards require to be sanded down and re-painted.

Some windows and doors need patched and repaired, although it might be more cost effective to replace.

# Rainwater goods

Gutters and down pipes appear to be a combination of upvc and cast. Some work would be required to bring them up to a good standard.

## Flat roof above the front porch

The flat roof has some form of bitumen coating on the surface. This is now cracked and breaking up. There is no way of knowing the original covering until this is removed and a new coating applied.



When the property was built, lead would have been used.

## <u>Centre valley</u>

Cannot be seen from ground level.



You should be aware that we have reported upon problems evident to us at the time of our visit, we are not commenting in any general sense on the risk of fungal decay or any other defect not evident at this time or that may develop in the future.

In any property it is inevitable that there are concealed timbers which cannot be inspected without opening up. We have not, from our inspection found any visual evidence of infestation or fungal decay excepting any that has been specified in our report and accordingly, we are not hereby recommending any treatment. However, we have only inspected those exposed surfaces that were accessible at the time of our inspection, and it would not therefore be prudent for you to regard such an inspection as totally reliable. If you need to be sure of the absence of any further visual evidence of any infestation or fungal infection, please inform us and we will then submit a quotation detailing the exposure work that would be required for a more detailed examination.

Where we have drawn your attention to items that are outside the scope of our survey as defined earlier, these items should be regarded as helpful suggestions and not a full complete assessment of any problems that may exist. This property has been surveyed by Mr Neil Logan CSRT, and should you have any queries regarding any element of this report, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

We look forward to your future custom.

Yours faithfully

Neil Logan CSRT Director