gleeds

Building Awards 2011 Winner

CONSTRUCTION CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

CONDITION SURVEY

FOR MELTON BOUROUGH COUNCIL

GRETTON COURT, MELTON MOWBRAY

NOVEMBER 2012

Melton Borough Council

Gleeds Building Surveying Limited
Wilford House, 1 Clifton Lane, Nottingham, NG11 7AT
T: 0115 977 8000 www.gleeds.com

CONTENTS

Approved For Issue

Director: T R Shipman BSc (Hons) MRICS

Date: 28 November 2012

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Survey Details

Gleeds Building Surveying Ltd were instructed by David Manns on 7th November 2012 to undertake a building condition survey of Gretton Court, Egerton View, Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray.

The survey was undertaken by Carl Kesterton BSc (Hons) Dip.NDEA MRICS, on Wednesday 21st November 2012.

The weather at the time of the survey was overcast and wet.

The survey inspection covers the major elements of construction of this property and its general condition. We undertook internal inspections to approximately 10% of the flats. It does not cover all minor items of repair but does provide a general overview of all elements of the building. No opening up or testing has been carried out at the property and the inspection of the building services is limited to purely a visual inspection by a building surveyor and not a services engineer.

All references to left and right are taken as if facing the property from the front. The main entrance of the property faces south towards Egerton View.

This report has been prepared for the sole benefit of the person to whom it is addressed. No third party may rely on it unless Gleeds Building Surveying Limited has issued a letter to that third party referring to this report by date and reference number and stating that the third party may rely on it. Gleeds Building Surveying Limited will not unreasonably refuse a request to issue such a letter to a single third party (who may not assign it). Gleeds Building Surveying Limited will not have any liability to any such third party which is greater than its liability to the party to whom this report was originally addressed.

1.2 Property Details

Gretton Court is a mid-1980's purpose built building providing a "Housing with care" (Independent living) development.

The building has 40 flats within an H shaped floor plan, comprising of Studio, 1 bedroom and mobility/ wheelchair friendly units. The majority of flats have independent cooking and washing facilities and alarm system. On site staff provide 24 hr. cover. Facilities include, lift to upper floor, communal lounge and dining room laundry and guest flats.

The building comprising Gretton Court are formed using traditional brick and block construction, entailing a combination of loadbearing masonry with timber and steel structural elements. The building has 2 habitable storeys containing individual residences, with common stairwells, lobbies and corridors providing access.

The building has a pitched and hipped timber roof covered with clay interlocking pan tiles onto bitumen based under felting (Sarking felt), lead flashings are fitted at abutments. Large overhanging eaves offer improved protection from the elements to the exterior walls. u-PVC gutters are mounted to timber fascia boards at the eaves, serving to deposit rain water via wall secured u-PVC downpipes directly into drainage runs at ground level.

The external walls of the buildings are of brick and block cavity wall construction with bucket handle pointing to mortar joints, incorporating structural openings for windows, doors, passageways. PVC DPCs were noted to all external walls, in addition to penetrations for overflows, flues etc. Windows are typically a combination of polyester coated metal casement windows and more recent u-PVC replacements. Entry doors to common stairwells are typically formed from solid core timber, with doors to individual flats typically solid core timber (FDs30) with intumescent letter boxes. Floors throughout are formed from concrete construction.

Internally, the flats inspected were found to be constructed in a largely uniform layout; comprising a lounge / kitchen area, single bedroom and bathroom each accessible via a central hall served by the front door. Walls are typically formed from painted plaster block work or timber stud, with solid masonry partitioning the lounge / kitchen area from the rest of the flat. Ceilings were observed to be plastered, in many cases incorporating a textured finish, with a variety of floor coverings, carpet tiles and sheet vinyl, with ceramic tiles to Kitchen areas.

Common areas and stairwell areas typically comprise a variety of painted plaster walls and ceilings with suspended ceilings at ground level and carpet tiled concrete floor slab, fair faced brickwork and exposed timber beams are provided to the common room and rest areas. Risers are accessible from common area landings via a timber fire door; timber door sets and glazed partitioning typically provide separation to the enclosed common areas such as game rooms, meeting rooms and offices.

The grounds within the curtilage are situated on a sloping site towards the river Eye to the north and east, made up ground has raised levels to build upon and offer relief from the flood plain situated at the north and east perimeters, however the whole building is still situated within the flood plain area. Flooding was noted to the rear meadow at the time of inspection. There is a small tarmacadam surfaced car park to the south area, accessed via Egerton View. Landscaping is generally turfed, with pathways and patios formed from concrete paving slabs or tarmacadam and a number of trees located to the west and around the grounds generally.

1.3 General Condition, Defects and Observations

The property can be considered in a good condition generally, although tired and in some need of refreshing and minor maintenance. In summary:

- The roofs are generally in good condition but do require some minor maintenance; cleaning down.
- Some gutters and valleys are choked by fallen foliage and rainwater goods were leaking in numerous places.
- Some external gulley's to the drainage system are damaged and there is an open drain/rodding point.
- Vertical and diagonal cracking up to 5mm in width was noted within the common areas to the staff rest room and flats and offices above this area. Manifesting around door openings and ceiling joints, window joints and in the concrete floor at ground level. It is difficult to diagnose the cause of this cracking from a visual inspection alone. We did note that there are expansion joints to different wings of the building and being situated upon a flood plain there is a greater risk of ground movements which may be the cause of this cracking. It is quite possible that the foundations have suffered some differential settlement.
- There is some staining evident to the external brickwork around a number of overflow pipes at ground level exiting from a number of flats. The method employed to pass these pipes beneath screeding means that it is difficult to ascertain the cause without excavation. We would expect that leaking to joints is the cause but intrusive investigation would be required to confirm this.
- Doors to common stairwells do not have vision panels; these should be installed to reduce the risk of accidents.
- Timber soffits and facia require treatment to prolong their life.
- Decorations and floor finishes appear tired.

Observations

- The radiators within the building have high temperature exposed surfaces which could be a danger to elderly occupants.
- There was no Building manual or record of an Asbestos survey on site.
- Not all roof void hatches are insulated.

2 External Condition

2.1 Roofs

2.1.1 The roof coverings are generally in good condition and require minimal remedial works. From ground level inspection lines and levels appeared true and the coverings were consistent and intact with no apparent deflections in the slopes or planes of the roof surfaces.

2.1.2 The pitch of the roof is approximately 30^{o} this angle tends to hold leaves and litter more readily, although the roof tiles are generally in good condition with no signs of decay or failure there were large areas of moss growth and amounts of fallen foliage was present.

2.1.3 Roofing under felt appeared in good condition from limited internal inspections.

2.1.4 Ridge and hip tiles appeared in good condition generally including the mortaring to the joints and verges. Open valleys were relatively narrow for the pitch of the roof and therefore again held debris more readily; these were also choked with leaf litter. The condition was therefore difficult to inspect but there was no signs of water ingress internally at the time of survey.

2.1.5 The mock chimney stack which vented from the kitchen area appeared in good condition with no signs of wear or damage, capping, pointing and lead flashings were in good condition with no notable defects.

2.2 Gutters and Rainwater Pipes

2.2.1 The uPVC Rainwater goods generally are showing signs of general wear and tear, with some solar degradation and large amounts of leaf debris was evident in the gutters which was blocking outlets to rainwater pipes, there were also numerous points of overflow and leaks to gutter joints evident.

2.2.2 There is sagging of gutters especially at corner joints which cause choking and overflowing to occur.

2.2.3 We recommend that all rainwater gutters are cleared and downpipes jetted through on a six monthly cycle of planned maintenance, with piecemeal repairs undertaken where goods are damaged or incomplete.

2.2.4 Allowance has been made for regular cleaning of the rainwater goods in Appendix B.

2.3 External Walls

2.3.1 The walls are a cavity construction externally ½ brick thick stretcher bond. It is unknown as to the levels of insulation within the cavity however the age would suggest some insulation is present and is probably a 50mm cavity fill. External brickwork generally is in a good condition. In general, minor repointing is required to lead flashing joints.

2.3.2 Solar degradation of the wall panelling below the windows around the dining room is evident which has bleached the panels; this is a cosmetic issue and does not deteriorate its structural integrity or performance.

2.3.4 Minor Salt staining is apparent at low level especially around pipe penetrations from flats at low level. This is a cosmetic issue at present and is not detrimental to the performance of the brickwork; however any long term leaking from pipes could cause spalling to the surrounding brickwork over time. We would recommend further investigations and remediation.

2.3.5 Damp proof course was noted to the external walls; no bridging of this level was seen however the raising of ramps up to the DPC was evident; we did not see any issues of dampness within the building.

2.4 Windows and External Doors

2.4.1 Windows were in the main the original polyester-coated metal framed double glazed units. Having top hung casements and transoms, large windows had opening restrictors set within the hinge. All the units tested were fully functional. Some minor maintenance was required to catches where the catch plastic seats were missing.

2.4.2 Polyester-coated metal casements are typically in a good condition, well-fitting and adequately protect internal areas from the elements. A recent replacement with u-PVC casement window has been installed and was noted to be in a good condition.

2.4.3 Some windows were designed as bays, set outside the wall line and supported by timber studding and clad with timber boarding, these were in good condition generally however the timber cladding does requiring treatment in the short term to maintain them.

2.4.4 Brick on edge angled sills were provided to widows, these appeared in good condition, and only some minor repointing is required.

2.4.5 Polyester-coated metal doors are provided which are in good condition generally.

3.0 Internal Condition

3.1 Floors

3.1.1 Floors at Gretton Court are typically formed from cast in-situ concrete throughout, all surfaces were covered with coverings either carpet tiles, vinyl or ceramic tiles in the kitchen area. These areas were generally noted to be in a good condition.

3.1.2 Floor finishes within the flats inspected were concealed with a combination of vinyl and carpet at the time of inspection.

3.1.3 Cracking to the floor slab was noted to the entrance door of the staff room and the foyer area. These appeared to be approximately 5mm in width, and at various locations within this vicinity. We did not expose the foundations and cannot therefore report on their form of construction or condition. We would recommend further investigations and monitoring of the movements.

3.2 Ceilings

3.2.1 Ceilings to flats comprise generally of a painted surface finish to plaster or a textured finish, which was noted as in generally good condition. Lower ground communal areas comprise of suspended ceiling grids, these appeared in good order generally.

3.2.2 Ceilings within first floor common areas were noted as being formed from plasterboard, often incorporating a textured finish which could indicate the presence of low levels of Asbestos. We would recommend an Asbestos survey if one has not been carried out previously; this report should be kept on site for inspection by visiting maintenance operatives.

3.3 Walls

3.3.1 Walls within common areas typically comprise of painted plaster with fair faced brickwork to the communal rest room. Condition of the paint surface finish was generally noted as fair condition, excepting isolated cracking as previously mentioned which can be picked up as part of cyclical redecoration.

3.3.2 Walls within flats are typically formed from stud partitioning, with a run of primarily solid partitioning separating the lounge / kitchen area from the rest of the flat.

3.3.3 Wall decorations vary but were generally found to be in an acceptable condition on internal walls. We understand that decoration to the flats is the responsibility of the tenant and as such our budget costs represent the common and office areas only.

3.4 Joinery & Fittings

3.4.1 Entrance doors to flats should offer the inhabitants 30 minutes protection from the effects of smoke and fire, these doors appeared to be adequate, where possible to inspect. External doors were observed to be fitted with brushed smoke seals.

3.4.2 Internal doors within flats are typically formed from 44mm hollow core timber and were generally observed to be in a fair condition.

3.4.3 Timber skirting's and architraves were decorated soft wood throughout and these were generally found to be in a good condition.

3.4.4 There were no apparent signs of any infestation from wood boring insects, wet rot or dry rot although no opening up was carried out.

3.5 Service Installations

3.5.1 Water supplies to the toilet and sinks within the property are fed by copper pipes which pass through the building. In most instances the pipework is concealed. Within flats the water is heated by foam insulated immersion heaters within airing cupboards

3.5.2 Heating within individual flats is typically provided by wall mounted LTHW panel radiators fed by 10mm micro-bore copper pipes, although a number of properties within have their own forms of additional heating and air conditioning. Heating and air condition within the building was generally good..

3.5.3 LTHW panel radiators were provided to common areas.

3.5.4 Each flat has a distribution board generally located within the hallway in flats. All distribution boards were found to have MCB's, a rating of 100amps (suitable for a one/two bedroom flats) and have been tested within the last 5 years in accordance with IEE Regulations.

3.5.5 Earth bonding was noted to the hot and cold water supplies of some but not all flats. Many insurance companies now require regular inspection of the electrical installation of commercial buildings as a condition of the retention of insurance cover.

3.5.6 The building predominantly utilises a combination of natural ventilation, with trickle vents incorporated within the existing window frames and mechanical extract fans provided in areas of water vapour producing areas such as kitchens, bathrooms and laundry rooms..

3.5.7 No testing of service was undertaken, testing by a suitably trained Mechanical and Electrical Engineer is recommended to ensure systems are fully operational.

4.0 External Areas

4.1.1 There were areas of paving forming ramps and patios around the building, there were also drainage gulley's inspection chambers and rodding points. It was noted that ground settlements had caused these to become raised from the ground level and paving's to become irregular and unstable underfoot causing trip hazards and a danger. We would recommend that ground works are undertaken generally to level and stabilize these areas.

4.1.2 Some drainage gulley's were damaged and there was an open drainage pipe these should be repaired and the open pipework closed off.

4.1.3 The Tarmacadam areas were generally in a good condition with no signs of spalling, cracking or breakup.

5.0 Other Considerations

5.1 Means of Escape

5.1.1 Fire escape routes from the upper floors of the buildings are via the common stairwells, which discharge directly onto external areas. Where possible to inspect escape routes throughout the building was found to be free and clear of obstructions during the inspection.

5.1.2 Common means of escape provided by stairwells should offer building users 30 minutes protection from the effects of smoke and fire, including all doors giving access to the stair which should be fire-resisting and self-closing. This appears to be generally met at Gretton Court; however we would recommend that a Fire risk assessment is carried out.

5.1.3 Windows within flats had large casements which could be a means of escape in an emergency situation.

5.2 Disabled Access

5.2.1 It is recommended that the access strategy for the building is regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with the Disability & Equality Act 2010. We are unaware if a full Disability Discrimination Act Audit has been carried out but the following observations were made:

- Ramps have a 1:12 gradient but and have handrails which are painted dark brown, in accordance with the recommendations of BS8300: 2009. Handrails should be discriminated from the background by a colour contrast for the visually impaired.
- There are no accessible parking bays within the car park.
- There are no tactile paving's provided externally to indicate change of levels or hazards.

Appendix A

Photographs

1


2


3


4


5


6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18


19


20


21


22


23

24

Appendix B

Summary of Budget Costs

PROPERTY: Gretton Court
ADDRESS: Egerton View
Melton Mowbray

Condition Code
1 - Excellent
2 - Good
3 - Below Standard
4 - Poor

Priority Code
1 - H&S
2 - Structural
3 - Essential Repairs
4 - Desirable

Date: 26/11/2012

					Estimated Cost & Year									
Element	**Description and Condition**	**Cond. Code**	**Recommended Works**	**PR Code**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Year 6**	**Year 7**	**Year 8**	**Year 9**	**Year 10**
Main Building - Roofs														
Roof	Heavily soiled surfaces	2	Cleaning down	4	£2,000.00				£2,000.00					£2,000.00
Flashings	Open joints missing mortar	2	Repointing	4	£500.00									£500.00
Drainage	Poor jointing, guttering sagging, leaf and litter blocking. Damaged gulleys	3	Cleaning, flushing, realigning and Repairs. (Annual cleaning)	3	£1,300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£1,300.00
Joinery	Weathering to external timber	3	External refurbishment to soffits fascias etc	4	£5,000.00									
Main Building - Superstructure														
External Walls	Repointing	4	Minor Repointing	4	£500.00									£500.00
Concrete floor	Cracking beneath floor coverings	3	Remove floor coverings and repair cracks	3	£1,000.00									
LTHW Radiator panels	No protection for occupants from high temperature surfaces	3	Provide LST panel covers to flats	3	£12,000.00									
Stairwell doors	No vision panels causing hazard to users	3	Provide vision panels	3	£1,000.00									
External Areas														
Patios and drainage	Raised levels of exterior pavings and drainage points causing trip hazards	3	Build up ground around surface drainage points and rebed patio pavings to remove trip hazards	3	£1,000.00									
Steel Handrails	Not coloured to DDA standards	3	Decorate to achive colour contrast	3	£200.00									
Pathways and ramps	No tactile pavings to depict change of levels or hazards for visually impaired persons	3	Provide tactile paving in accordance with DDA	3	£2,000.00									
Cyclical Redecoration														
Internal	Common areas and offices	3	Redecorations	3	£10,000.00				£10,000.00					£10,000.00
Flooring	Worn carpet tiling and sheet vinyl flooring	3	Replace areas that are heavily worn in common areas and offices	3	£30,000.00									£30,000.00
External	Timber soffits fascias	3	Redecorations	3	£5,000.00				£5,000.00					£5,000.00
				Sum-Totals	£71,500.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£17,300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£49,300.00