



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage



NATIONAL INVENTORY
of ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

VACANT TRADITIONAL FARMHOUSE CONSERVATION ADVICE REPORT TEMPLATE

Property Address:

Clients Name:

Date of Inspection:

Author:

Note for Building Owner:

This report has been produced by an accredited Conservation Professional for you to use. If you decide not to act on the advice in the report, you do this at your own risk. The report aims to:

- help you make a reasoned and informed decision when purchasing the property, or when planning for repairs, maintenance or upgrading of the property;
- provide detailed advice on condition;
- describe the identifiable risk of potential or hidden defects;
- where practicable and agreed, provide an estimate of costs for identified repairs; and
- make recommendations as to any further actions or advice which need to be obtained before committing to purchase.

Note to Author:

The following should be inspected and addressed in the report:

- inspect the inside and outside of the main house, ancillary buildings and boundary features.
- inspect the parts of the electricity, gas/oil, water, heating, drainage and other services that can be seen, but these are not tested other than through their normal operation in everyday use.

A traffic light system should be assigned to the suggested actions/recommendations which ranks them order of urgency.

	Defects that are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently
	Defects that need repair or replacing but are not considered to be either serious or urgent.
	No repair is currently needed.
	Not inspected. If there are concerns about elements that the inspection cannot cover, the report should advise any further investigations that are needed.

Where practicable and agreed the report will include approximate costs of any work for identified repairs and make recommendations on how these repairs should be carried out in line with best conservation practice. Some maintenance and repairs that are suggested may be expensive. Purely cosmetic and minor maintenance defects that have no effect on performance might not be reported. The report provided is not a warranty.



1. INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT:

1.1 Author's Name

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1.2 Conservation Accreditation/member number of report author
(RIAI, IEI/CARE, SCSi if applicable):

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1.3 Company Name

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1.4 Date of the Inspection

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1.5 Full Address of Property (incl. Eircode)

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1.6 Weather conditions when the inspection took place

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1.7 The status of the property when the inspection took place

Note the current use in terms of vacancy and/or under use). The purpose of this section is to establish the overall use of the property including ancillary structures and site particularly where they are vacant or only partially used.

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1.8 Owner/Custodian

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1.9 Consent to the survey obtained from Owner/Custodian

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1.10 Restrictions during Survey (if any)

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1.11 RPS reference/ACA name (where applicable)

The pilot scheme is not limited to Protected Structures or historic structures located within an Architectural Conservation Area, it includes traditionally constructed buildings which do not have statutory protection. 'Traditionally constructed' is normally but not exclusively taken to mean buildings with solid walls constructed of stone, brick and/or mud with lime and/or earth mortars. Please note that any works to a protected structure and/or a structure located within an Architectural Conservation Area should be discussed with your Local Authority prior to works commencing as statutory consent may be required (Planning Permission/Section 57 Declaration/Section 5 Declaration.

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1.12 NIAH reference & Rating (where applicable)

Check Buildings of Ireland website to establish if building has been surveyed by the NIAH: <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/buildings-search/>

1.13 Archaeological Monuments reference (where applicable)

*Any works which will impact an archaeological monument will also require prior notification to the National Monuments Service <https://www.archaeology.ie>
At present, a monument is protected in one of four ways: – It is recorded in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP); registered in the Register of Historic Monuments (RHM); a national monument subject to a preservation order (or temporary preservation order) or a national monument in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage or a Local Authority.*

1.14 Special Area of Conservation (SAC where applicable)

These are prime wildlife conservation areas in the country, considered to be important on a European as well as Irish level. Most Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are in the countryside although a few sites reach into urban areas. <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac>

1.15 Site location

*The site complex/location should be clearly outlined in red. Confirm the location and context of the subject site by applying to OSI and purchasing current mapping. i.e. planning pack for the report e.g. <https://store.osi.ie/planning-pack.html>
Provide a brief written description of the evolution of the site through a review of the readily available historical mapping on-line from the historic environment viewer (HEV) and GeoHive Map Viewer. Check existence on 1st and 2nd Edition OS Maps. Confirm key characteristics of the site and any relationships to immediately adjacent cultural sites.
<https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/help.html> & <https://webapps.geohive.ie/mapviewer/index.html>. We draw attention to the fact inspectors/architects will not be able to copy and paste OSI mapping from the HEV for reports, as it will infringe OSI or DigiGlobe copyright. It is advised that the author abide by the OSI copyright requirements/licensing agreement. (The purpose of this section is to identify key characteristics of the overall site – burgage plot, irregular building line, plan form, ancillary structures, yard arrangement etc.)*

1.16 Is the building/buildings shown on 1st edition OS Map?

1.17 Is the building/buildings shown on 2nd edition OS Map?

1.18 Brief Appraisal of Significance

Brief appraisal of significance in the context of the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines and the NIAH Handbook 2022. Establish whether the special significance resides in the exterior character, as

part of a wider landscape/streetscape, and/or whether it includes rare historic fabric and spaces internally. Please emphasise whether the building retains significant historic interiors such as a bed outshot, chimney canopy, historic roof structure (bog oak/unhewn roof timbers) or fitted furnishings (dressers, built-in presses, etc.).

2 DESCRIPTION/ASSESSMENT

2.1 Brief Description of Property & Grounds

This section should provide a brief description of the exterior of the property while taking into account any site features of note such as a farmyard, outbuildings/ancillary structures, boundary walls, gate piers, gates and surrounding streetscape and/or landscape (field boundaries). Use a selection of annotated photographic images as necessary to describe the structure's context and external character (with owner's consent).

2.2 Year of Construction (can be approximate check 1st and 2nd edition OS Maps)

2.3 Extensions (if any) and approximate phases of construction

2.4 Construction Materials where known, including Ancillary Buildings & Boundary Features

2.5 Building Energy Rating

(if there is a Building Energy Rating Certificate - BER – Please record current rating here)

2.6 Services – (tick appropriate box below)

Provide details of alternative

Gas	Mains		Other	
Electricity	Mains		Other	
Water Supply	Mains		Other	
Foul drainage	Mains		Other	
Surface Drainage	Mains		Other	
Communication Services	Phone line		Broadband	

Heating: (tick appropriate box below)

Gas		Electric		Solid Fuel		Oil		AGA / Range		Other	
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Insert additional narrative where required

2.7 Limitations to Inspection:

2.8 Exterior of Main Building

Describe composition and condition of each component followed by suggested recommendation

Chimneystacks

Consider the following:

Position of chimneys; materials (exposed brick, or stone, rendered etc.); condition of finishes, structural movement, no. of chimneypots; approx. height of stack; are they original/rebuilt (evidence for); flashings; flaunching, bird guards; spark guards; caps to pots etc.

Note: As part general remedial works to the roof, chimneys should be repointed or re-plastered with traditional lime mortar where renders/mortar have failed and all rooted vegetation should be removed. Cracked pots should be replaced and crow guards where in poor condition should be replaced. Generally all flashings should be replaced as part of re-roofing works.

Roof Coverings

Consider the following:

Materials: form - gabled / hipped / half hipped; materials - slate (native or imported), stone and thatch. Note the material and technique / presence of scraw / sod under thatch / tin over thatch or combination of; features - presence of dormers / roof lights; treatment of ridges, hips, eaves, barges etc.

Rainwater pipes and Gutters

Consider the following: materials (cast-iron, aluminium, uPVC etc.); profile of gutter; complete or incomplete system; No. of downpipes, provision of gullies etc.

Note: Unless it is raining at the time of the inspection it is generally not possible to state whether the gutters and pipework are watertight. All gutters should be cleared at least once a year and preferably twice a year to ensure they can run clear without obstructions.

Main walls

Consider the following:

Materials - stone / brick, earth; renders and pointing – lime based, earthen based, earth / lime-based, presence of cementitious mortar; paint finishes (modern/limewash) renders intact / removed; later finishes to house and/or extensions; settlement or cracking – evidence and location and severity of cracking); construction

<i>phase joint; lintels exposed and/or concealed; presence of weather slating, etc.</i>	
Foundations/base of wall/Damp proof course: <i>Consider the following: Internal finished floor levels relative to external ground levels at entrance (s) and around building, presence of retaining walls / banked earth / trenches / cobbled gullies. Evidence of ponding and/or surface ponding of water around building. Evidence of splashback against walls, presence of concrete path around base of house including condition of.</i>	<i>Note: Foundations are generally not exposed as part of the inspection and therefore it is not possible to comment on their adequacy. However, evidence of settlement, subsidence and structural movement will be noted. With older buildings it is generally not possible to establish whether a damp-proof course has been built into the wall and generally it is assumed that no DPC has been provided. As part of substantial refurbishment of the property some building owners may be advised to install an injected damp proof course. However, due to the make-up of most traditional walls, the success of such injected DPC's is highly questionable. It should also be noted that the extent of decay which has occurred as a result of a lack of a damp proof course is generally minor in nature being cosmetic rather than structural. It may be acceptable to carry out localised repairs to low-level plaster and avoid the insertion of a damp proof course. This matter could be assessed further in line with an owner's requirements in terms of accommodation and standards of finish.</i>
Suspended Floor/Sub floor ventilation	
Windows: <i>Consider the following: materials, design, age, significance</i>	
Doors: <i>Consider the following: materials, design, age, significance</i>	
Porches/Extensions: <i>Consider the following: materials, design, age, significance</i>	
Other Joinery & finishes if applicable:	
Other:	
Limitations to Inspection:	

2.9 Interior of Main Building

Describe composition and condition of each component followed by suggested recommendation

Roof Structure/Loft/Attic <i>Consider the following: roof construction (use of common rafters, purlins, ridge board, coupled rafters, , collar ties, trusses, centres between rafters/trusses & dimensions where possible; sawn/roughly hewn timbers/bog pine/oak etc.);</i>	
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parging/rendering under slates; roofing felt (type); existing ventilation; timber or flour sack sheeting to underside of roof; condition of chimneys; soot blackening of roof timbers; storage and water tanks; presence of vermin; condition and evidence of water ingress; existing insulation. Good photos of the roof structure are important.

Protected Species

Note any evidence of colonisation in roof/building of protected species such as pine martens, red squirrels, swallows, swifts, bats etc. These species are protected. Derogation licences are required. <https://www.npws.ie/licensesandconsents/disturbance/application-for-derogation-licence> <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/files/strict-protection-of-certain-animal-and-plant-species.pdf> https://birdwatchireland.ie/app/uploads/2021/02/Wildlife-in-Buildings_ENG_LR_Part2.pdf

Ceilings

Consider the following: materials such as lath and plaster, plaster on reeds, plasterboard, timber sheeting, hardboard sheeting, tongue and groove boarding, plywood etc.

Note: Lining paper to ceilings will often prevent a thorough inspection of the ceilings and may obscure cracking.

Note: With old lath and plaster ceilings, moisture penetration or leakage through the roof can cause the timber laths to the ceiling to swell as they absorb moisture. As the laths swell, the plaster nibs which form part of and support the ceiling are pinched or squeezed. This often causes the plaster nibs to snap and when the laths eventually dry out the ceiling can sag as the nibs have now come loose. This commonly results in cracking and in more extreme cases, sagging and even partial collapse of sections of the ceiling. Where the timber laths do not dry out, they can develop wood rot as fungi colonise, consume and weaken the timber. This can also result in cracking, sagging and partial collapse of a ceiling. Note: Where timber becomes wet and is colonised by fungi such as wet rot or dry rot, these fungi consume the constituent parts of the timber such as cellulose and lignin. This weakens the timber and tends to cause the timber to be crushed or squeezed under the load it is supporting be it a floor joist, roof

	<p><i>rafter or lintel in a wall. Evidence of this is usually seen as cracking in the surrounding wall and ceiling plaster.</i></p>
<p>Walls & Partitions <i>Consider the following: Are walls loadbearing or non-loadbearing; is the wall solid / brick-nogged / stud /lath and plaster / timber sheeting; is there built in furniture / wall presses / dressers/ bed outshots.; cracking and location of; presence of wallpapers and or wall cladding; presence of newspapers and dates; evidence of replastering using modern mortars and plasters such as cementitious mortars and gypsum plasters.</i></p>	<p><i>Note: internal walls and partitions will be either load-bearing or non-load bearing. In older buildings, non-load bearing walls often take up some of the load of an adjoining roof, ceiling and floor structures. Alterations to walls, such as forming or enlarging a doorway should only be carried out following detailed inspection and localised opening up of these structures and features. Minor to moderate cracking will often occur over doorways in old buildings as the lintel and frame of the doorway settles over time and as a result of continued use of the door. Such cracking is often of little structural concern but may impact on decoration. Wall paper and lining paper to walls will often prevent a thorough inspection of the walls and may obscure cracking, damp staining and other such defects.</i></p>
<p>Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues <i>Consider the following: materials; canopied hoods and supporting timber structure, hearths, iron cranes and grates, ventilators, later repairs / modern interventions, presence of chimneypieces and its materials – cast-iron, stone, timber; evidence of water penetration; cracking to chimneybreasts etc.</i></p>	<p><i>Note: Generally, it is recommended that all flues, which it is intended to use are inspected and cleaned before use. Re-lining of some flues may be required and is always required where new gas or solid-fuel stoves are being installed. Flues should be swept on a regular basis. Ventilation to each end of a flue is important as a means of dissipating dampness. Therefore, fireplaces should be kept open and where these have been closed over a vent should be fitted. The use of solid fuel stoves in thatched buildings is NOT RECOMMENDED.</i></p>
<p>Timber Floors <i>Consider the following: Joist direction, condition of boards, evidence of deflection, dampness and decay; have boards been previously lifted or altered, coverings (particularly use of impermeable linoleum, carpets, underlays etc.). Presence of newspapers and dates. Consider upper floors: findings of heel tests; presence of beams and struts; dimensions where possible of upper floor joists and centres.</i></p>	<p><i>Note: Where possible, loose edges/corners of floor coverings should be lifted to allow the inspector to establish the nature of the underlying floor.</i> <i>Note: Extreme care should be taken where holes have to be notched or drilled through floor joists to accommodate new heating pipes or electrical cables. Where excessive notching or drilling is undertaken, the joists will be weakened and this can result in a floor becoming springy or bouncy and can damage underlying ceilings.</i></p>
<p>Solid Floor <i>Consider the following: Location of floor/portion of building; age if known; type; insulation if known; later floor</i></p>	

<i>coverings (linoleum/carpets etc.); presence of newspapers and dates.</i>	<i>Where a later solid floor has been laid it is not possible to identify whether insulation has been incorporated into the slab without excavating part of the floor.</i>
Flagstones/Paving/Tiling on earth	
Windows <i>Note linings and shutters where present.</i>	
Interior Doors <i>Note design and construction materials, historic latches, fittings, hinges, locks etc.</i>	
Woodwork <i>Consider the following: staircase and other joinery such as architraves, shutters, skirtings etc.</i>	
Furniture and built in fittings <i>Consider the following: dressers, settles, beds, wall presses, shelves, coat hooks/racks, etc.</i>	
Bathroom fittings	
Kitchen fittings	
Evidence of Dampness <i>Consider presence of and note locations of staining, discolouration, algae, deterioration of paint/plaster etc.</i>	
Surface Condensation <i>Consider presence of and note locations of mildew, black mould, staining, streaking, peeling paper, lifting wallpaper; presence of large pieces of furniture against external walls which restrict air circulation etc.</i>	<i>Note: Condensation occurs where water vapour in air comes in contact with a cold surface such as a window, wall or ceiling and condenses back to a liquid. A number of contributing factors will determine the rate or extent of condensation. These include levels of heating, ventilation and modern living patterns such as cooking, bathing and washing and drying of clothes. The damp conditions allow black mould to grow. All moulds give off spores which can be damaging to health and therefore steps should be taken to counteract condensation. Problems with condensation are generally alleviated by adequate heating and ventilation. Internal temperatures should be maintained above 13 degrees Celsius and that all bathrooms and kitchens be fitted with extractor fans to remove water vapour and steam.</i>
Wood Rot and Timber Decay <i>Identify locations and evidence of fruiting bodies, cuboidal cracking to timberwork, hyphal-strands, mycelium, red spore dust (for instance on top of wardrobes and</i>	<i>The primary causes of dampness in older houses tends to be a combination of rising damp, moisture passing through a wall from the exterior, roof leaks, plumbing leaks, and condensation. Inappropriate alterations such as the use of hard impermeable external renders, internal</i>

shelves), condition of affected timber elements etc.

plasters and solid floors can cause or exacerbate damp problems. Inspection and testing for dampness is done using sight, smell and touch as well as through the use of a moisture meter. At all times it is important to take a holistic approach to the diagnosis of dampness. It should be noted that the use of a moisture meter alone is not always an adequate diagnosis for dampness, particularly rising damp. In many cases, problems with condensation or moisture penetrating through a wall, can be mistaken for rising damp. Such a misdiagnosis can result in unnecessary and potentially destructive remedial works being undertaken which still fail to address the root problem. Moisture meter readings are only relative and fall into different categories as follows: up to 170 dry; 170-200 risk of dampness; 200-999 damp or wet.

Insect Infestation:

Consider evidence of and note locations of exit flight holes (historic or active); are exit holes clean or dirty (i.e. recent or old); presence of wood bore dust indicating active infestation and condition of affected timber elements etc.

Spraying of timber is often recommended as a means of eradicating woodworm. Unfortunately, indiscriminate spraying rarely has any significant impact on woodworm as the spray is not absorbed into the timber and has no effect on the woodworm living beneath the timber surface. While the spray may have some effect on beetles which might land on the timber to lay eggs or beetles emerging from the timber, in many cases the spray is soon brushed or washed away as part of housekeeping operations and thus has no effect on the beetles. Injecting insecticide into woodworm holes is also unlikely to have an effect as these holes will now be empty following the emergence of the beetle. It is advised to eliminate all causes of dampness and promote drying to reduce moisture content to below about 15%, for example, by controlling condensation. Major damage could necessitate conservative timber repairs but avoid automatic wholesale replacement. Secondary measures may be required, particularly where infestation is extensive, timber lacks durability or it is hard to cut moisture levels sufficiently. Action could entail targeted chemical treatment - Where advice is sought, this should be from an independent professional or consultant, not a remedial treatment contractor.

Evidence of Potential Rising Damp:

Note locations of potential rising damp; assess condition of external wall surfaces; condition of internal wall surfaces; condition of external roof drainage and surface drainage – consider spillage/leakage from rainwater goods; external ground levels, presence of/condition of drains –

Rising damp can potentially occur where moisture in the soil beneath a building rises up through its walls as a result of 'capillary rise' or flow. In order to counter this form of moisture movement, modern walls incorporate damp proof courses which halt rising damp. However, most buildings built before the First World War were constructed without damp proof courses with the result that capillary rise can sometimes occur. Rising damp is typically characterised by stains or a tide mark at the base of a wall. It can cause the breakdown of plasters and paint finishes, salt efflorescence in masonry and plasters, and the decay of timbers in contact



consider potential leakage from drains; is moisture at depth in the wall or only on the surface; presence of salt efflorescence etc.

with damp walls and soil. Moisture levels in a wall can be affected by the porosity of building materials and the rate of evaporation from the wall. The presence of impervious finishes, such as cement-based external render, will hinder evaporation of moisture in a wall to the exterior – instead it is likely to evaporate to the interior of the building where it causes staining and damage to plaster finishes. Moisture content within a wall can also be subject to seasonal variations and changes in the water table. Where impermeable concrete floors are installed there is further tendency for any moisture beneath a building to migrate towards the walls where, in concentrated quantities, it rises up through the wall, resulting in or aggravating problems with ‘rising damp’. Remedies should always be appraised with regard to their effectiveness and the potential to cause damage. Addressing damp conditions will often require a suite of interventions rather than a single cure-all operation. Caution is recommended with regard to any proposals to install an injected damp proof course around the base of the walls. Injected damp proof courses consist of a liquid silicon which is injected into a series of holes around the base of the walls and ‘theoretically’ forms a continuous layer or barrier which prevents moisture rising through the wall. In traditional buildings, this continuous barrier is rarely achieved and as a result it is also usual practice to remove all plaster to a height of approx. 1m and replace this with a water-proof plaster as part of these ‘damp-proofing’ works. Such damp-proofing works are often used as a panacea, disguising, and hiding the actual damp problem rather than actually tackling it.

Generally, the most effective way to address issues with rising damp in old buildings is to first ensure that drains and pipes running under a building are not leaking and aggravating damp problems and that rainwater from downpipes is also being drained away and isn’t just flowing in under the building. Further interventions may include the lowering of external ground-levels so they are at least 150mm below internal floor levels as well as the provision of French drains around the base of the exterior walls – these will draw ground moisture away from the walls of a building and allows moisture beneath the building to drain or evaporate into the trench before it starts to rise up through the walls. In many cases the simplest treatment is to hack off and replaster any localised damaged plaster and accept that this might have to be done again at a future date.

It is therefore recommended that the low impact and non-invasive actions outlined above are followed through before considering invasive and expensive damp-proofing measures.

	<i>Note: it is not possible to comment on any such defects which are covered, hidden within walls or floors, or which are not readily accessible.</i>
Evidence of Water Penetration: <i>Consider presence of and note locations of; consider defective chimneys; defective flashings; leaking / spillage from gutters, roofs, downpipes, defective barges and verges; external cracks in wall finishes; defective wall finishes; defective window and door joinery; inadequate drips to sills; abutting walls and outbuildings</i>	
Other	
Limitations to Inspection	

2.10 Services

** Services are generally hidden within the construction of the property. This means that only the visible parts can be inspected. The visual inspection cannot assess the services to make sure they work efficiently and safely, or meet modern standards.*

In relation to electrical installations it is recommended that a registered electrician check the property and its electrical fittings at least every ten years, or on change of occupancy. Furthermore, all gas and oil appliances and equipment should regularly be inspected, tested, maintained and serviced by a registered 'competent person' and in line with the manufacturer's instructions. This is important to make sure that the equipment is working correctly, to limit the risk of fire and carbon monoxide poisoning and to prevent carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from leaking into the air.

Electricity	
Gas/Oil	
Water	
Heating	
Water Heating	
Extraction <i>What kind of extraction is there in kitchens and bath/shower rooms?</i>	
Foul Drainage	
Surface Drainage	
Common services	
Other Services/Features	
Radon <i>Check radon maps: https://www.epa.ie/environment-and-you/radon/radon-map/</i>	

Limitations to Inspections	
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2.11 Grounds

External surfaces around building <i>Consider ground levels; sloping land; ponding of water; drainage; presence of drains, gullies, ACO drains, etc.; paving and cobbled surfaces; debris, etc.</i>	
Boiler House	
Ancillary Structures/Outbuildings	
Boundary/Site Features <i>Consider walls, fences, hedges, hedgerows, trees, gates, gate piers, sties, paving, cobbling, riding blocks, churn blocks, dunk pits, etc.</i>	
Paving/cobbled surfaces	

2.12 Ancillary Buildings Exterior (use for each building where applicable)
Describe composition and condition of each component followed by suggested recommendation

Chimneystacks	
Roof Coverings	
Rainwater pipes and Gutters	
Main walls	
Windows	
Doors	
Other Joinery & finishes:	
Other	
Limitations to Inspection	

2.13 Ancillary Buildings Interior (use for each building where applicable)
Describe composition and condition of each component followed by suggested recommendation

Roof Structure/Loft/Attic	
Ceilings	
Walls & Partitions	
Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues	
Built in fittings (such as stalls)	
Floors	
Windows	

Doors	
Woodwork (Staircase and joinery – architraves, shutters, skirtings etc.)	
Other	
Limitations to Inspection	

3. OVERALL ASSESSMENT & SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This purpose of this section is to provides an overview of the property, highlighting areas of concern, and to summarise the works required in order of prioritization. It also provides a summary of suggested repairs (and cost guidance where agreed) and recommendations for further investigations. This is the most useful section for the owner and the information provided should reflect this in terms of content and detail.

3.1 Defects that are serious and/or need to addressed urgently	
Exterior	
Interior	
Services	
Grounds	
Drainage	

3.2 Defects that need repairing or replacing but are not considered to be either serious or urgent	
Exterior	
Interior	
Services	

Grounds	
Drainage	

3.3 No repair is currently needed. The property should be maintained in line with the documents outlined in Section 4.	
Exterior	
Interior	
Services	
Grounds	
Drainage	

3.4 Suggested Energy Efficiency Improvement Measures:

This section describes energy related matters for the property as a whole. It takes account of a broad range of energy related features and issues already identified in the previous sections of this report, and discusses how they may be affected by the condition of the property. This is not a formal energy assessment of the building but part of the report that will help the owner to get a broader view of this topic. Although this may use

information obtained from an available BER, it does not check the certificate's validity or accuracy. This section will also suggest appropriate and sensitive energy upgrades taking into account the construction of the building, levels of surviving historic detail and need for hygroscopic materials.

Note: Not all conservation professionals will have energy modelling skills so engagement of additional expertise may form part of the report recommendations.

Attic

Consider the following:

Where standard flat ceiling is in situ, attic insulation can be easy to introduce. However, where ceilings follow the roof rafters this can be more difficult. If roof repairs are required, consider installing insulation between rafters while roof covering is removed as part of works.

External Walls:

Consider the following:

Where external render has been removed and/or existing modern renders have to be removed; there is an opportunity to apply insulated external render/insulation. Ensure that any proposed material is compatible with underlying material. Particular care needs to be taken when insulating walls built with earth-based mortars and renders.

Internals Wall

Consider the following:

Where existing internal plasters are in poor condition, have been removed or consist of incompatible cement/gypsum-based materials, it may be appropriate to apply internal wall insulation using appropriate micro permeable materials. Again particular care where existing walls have earth-based plasters and mortars.

Windows

Consider the following:

Where windows are modern replacements consider new double glazed windows. Where windows are historic, ensure they are draft-proofed; use

<p><i>shutters where present and use thermally lined curtains. Consider providing new shutters where there are no shutters. Consider use of secondary glazing.</i></p>	
<p>Doors <i>Consider the following: Where doors have been replaced, consider renewal with thermally efficient doors. Where historic doors are intact, consider upgrading internal side with insulation. Use thermally lined curtains across doors.</i></p>	
<p>Suspended timber floors <i>Consider lifting floorboards and insulating between floor joists. Consider a radon sump where appropriate.</i></p>	
<p>Solid Floors <i>Consider the following: Where a flagstone floor is intact, it can be very difficult to remove and reinstate. Often it is advised to retain in-situ in order to retain the historic floor. Where an existing modern floor slab is in place, it may be possible to install a layer of screed/insulation it. Where installing a new insulated floor slab there is also potential to introduce under-floor heating. Consider a radon sump where appropriate.</i></p>	
<p>Renewables <i>Consider potential renewables such as carefully sited domestic wind turbines. The use of adjoining building with a suitable south facing roof or an area in grounds where solar or PV panels can be placed at ground level to facilitate periodic cleaning of panels.</i></p>	
<p>Heating <i>Consider upgrading an existing boiler to more efficient model</i></p>	

<i>where already in situ to include insulation of all pipework</i>	
Heat pumps <i>Consider the following: where a new insulated floor slab has to be installed, a heat pump could be considered to provide low background heat, possibly with a secondary heat source to boost internal heating. Consider liaising with heating engineer.</i>	
Potential Plant Room <i>Consider a suitable location for a potential plant room to accommodate modern plant which can take up significant space, e.g. in outbuilding</i>	
Lighting <i>Use of energy efficiency lighting. The use of recessed down lighters should generally be avoided in historic ceilings.</i>	
Green Water <i>Potential for reusing water from sinks, showers/baths, washing machines etc.</i>	
Ventilation <i>Carefully consider that there is sufficient ventilation to allow for removal of water vapour, particularly mechanical ventilation in bathrooms and kitchens.</i>	
General	

General Recommendations	
Drainage <i>Consider the following: Existing ground water conditions & lack of maintenance in existing ground drainage. Consider use of attenuation ponds for heavier rain falls.</i>	
Water courses <i>Note location of neighbouring water courses which may inform location of septic tanks, waste water treatment plants and inform safety (new fencing etc.)</i>	

Existing trees / hedges / climbing plants on buildings.

Consider the following: Overhanging trees and climbing plants on buildings can prevent traditional buildings from drying out and require gutters to be cleared out more frequently. Any proposed cutting back should avoid the nesting season (March 1st to August 31st).

Health & Safety/Fire Recommendations

Consider the following installation of water reservoir/attenuation pond, water pump, smoke detectors with heat detectors in kitchens, provision of fire blankets and extinguishers, and carbon monoxide alarm. Where a modern thatched roof has to be fully rethatched, consider installation of fire retardant materials under the thatch.

3.5 Restoration

Suggest measures, where appropriate, to restore lost character/enhance amenity where there is sufficient evidence for their original form, or otherwise with an appropriate new design.

3.6 Other Upgrades

Optional, and if appropriate, suggest sensitive re-use and/or modifications to enhance amenity and show character to advantage

3.3 Issues for Your Legal Advisors/Further Investigations Required

The author does not act as the legal adviser and will not comment on any legal documents. However, if during the inspection they identify issues that your legal advisers may need to investigate further, these will be listed and explained in this section (for example, boundary issues, access issues, location of septic tank, unauthorised works etc.). You should show your legal advisers this section of the report.

Regulations	
Planning issues	
Guarantees	
Boundary issues	
Rights of Way	
Other Matters	

3.7 Risks

4 USEFUL REFERENCES

<https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/resources/>

National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Handbook June 2022 Edition

<https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2022/12/NIAH-Handbook-Edition-June-2022.pdf>

Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage guidance

<https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2019/10/Architectural-Heritage-Protection-Guidelines-for-Planning-Authorities-2011.pdf>

Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage Advice Series

- Maintenance <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2019/10/Maintenance-A-Guide-to-the-Care-of-Older-Buildings-2007.pdf>
- Windows: <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2019/10/Windows-A-Guide-to-the-Repair-of-Historic-Windows-2007.pdf>
- Bricks <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2019/10/Bricks-A-Guide-to-the-Repair-of-Historic-Brickwork-2009.pdf>
- Ironwork <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2019/10/Iron-The-Repair-of-Wrought-and-Cast-Ironwork-2009.pdf>
- Roofs <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2019/10/Roofs-A-Guide-to-the-Repair-of-Historic-Roofs-2010.pdf>
- Energy Efficiency <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2019/10/Energy-Efficiency-in-Traditional-Buildings-2010.pdf>
- Thatch <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2019/10/Thatch-A-Guide-to-the-Repair-of-Thatched-Roofs-2015.pdf>
- Paving <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2019/10/Paving-The-Conservation-of-Historic-Ground-Surfaces-2015.pdf>

Other Useful Publications

Irish Period Houses: A Conservation Guidance Manual (2015), Frank Keohane, Dublin Civic Trust.

*Very good guidance and overview of repairs and upgrades to any traditionally constructed buildings.

The Old House Handbook: The Essential Guide to Care and Repair (2008), Hunt and Suhr, SPAB.

French Drains

<https://www.spab.org.uk/advice/french-drains>

Damp/Condensation/Ventilation

- *Inform Guide: Damp. Causes and Solutions* (2007), Historic Scotland [Inform Guide: Damp: Causes and Solutions | Hist Env Scotland \(historicenvironment.scot\)](#)
- *Inform Guide: Condensation* (2020) Historic Environment Scotland [Inform Guide: Condensation | Historic Environment Scotland | HES](#)
- *Inform Guide: Mould Growth* (2019) Historic Scotland [Inform Guide: Mould Growth | Historic Environment Scotland | HES](#)
- *Inform Guide: Ventilation in Traditional Houses* (2008) Historic Scotland. [Inform Guide: Ventilation in Traditional Houses | Hist Env Scotland \(historicenvironment.scot\)](#)

- *The Warm Dry Home: A practical guide to understanding the causes and solutions of damp in buildings* (2022), Pete Ward, Heritage House Building and Restoration.

Structure

- *Inform Guide: Structural Joinery* (2010) Roger Curtis. Historic Scotland. [Inform Guide: Structural Joinery | Historic Environment Scotland](#)
- *Inform Guide: Structural Cracks* (2008) Ingal Maxwell. Historic Scotland [Inform Guide: Structural Cracks | Historic Environment Scotland](#)
- *Inform Guide: Foundations & Wall Footings* (2008) Ingal Maxwell. Historic Scotland. [Inform Guide: Foundations and Wall Footings | Hist Env Scotland \(historicensevironment.scot\)](#)

Woodworm

<https://www.spab.org.uk/advice/wood-boring-insects>

Energy Efficiency

- **2023 - Forthcoming publication from the Built Heritage Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage 'Guidance for improving Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings'**
- *Guide to Energy Retrofit of Traditional Buildings* (2021) Curtis, R. and Jenkins, M., Historic Scotland. <https://www.historicensevironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationid=47c9f2eb-1ade-4a76-a775-add0008972f3>
This guide describes retrofit measures which can be used to improve the energy efficiency of traditional buildings, whilst maintaining as much of their historic fabric and creating healthy indoor environments. These measures are backed up by research and showcased in various case studies, as trialed by Historic Environment Scotland. The guide also looks at compatibility with the existing fabric, compliance with building standards and the planning process. The purpose of the guide is to inform and provide guidance to homeowners, local authority building control officers, architects, designers and installers on how to approach the refurbishment of such buildings and balance various requirements.
- *The Old House EcoHandbook: A Practical Guide to Retrofitting for Energy Efficiency and Sustainability* (2019) Hunt, Suhr and McCloud, White Lion Publishing.
- Historic Environment Scotland refurbishment case studies. Range of case studies describe the repair and upgrade of traditionally constructed buildings and components. Building typologies include traditional farmhouses buildings. <https://www.historicensevironment.scot/about-us/what-we-do/conservation/refurbishment-case-studies/>
- *Insulating pitched roofs at ceiling level: energy efficiency and historic buildings* (2016), Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/retrofit-and-energy-efficiency-in-historic-buildings/insulating-roofs-in-historic-buildings/>
- *Insulating pitched roofs at rafter level: energy efficiency and historic buildings* (2016), Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/retrofit-and-energy-efficiency-in-historic-buildings/insulating-roofs-in-historic-buildings/>
- *The Old House EcoHandbook: A Practical Guide to Retrofitting for Energy Efficiency and Sustainability*, Hunt, Suhr and McCloud, 2019, White Lion Publishing.