
Peters Associates

Consulting Structural and Civil Engineers

QUEENS HOUSE • LAVENDER ALLEY • OLD MARKET PLACE • RIPON • NORTH YORKSHIRE HG4 1EB

Tel: (01765) 607291

Fax: (01765) 607295

Email: ripon@petersassociates.net

STRUCTURAL INSPECTIONS - DOMESTIC PROPERTY

The Problem

With the increasing demands by purchasers, building societies, banks and insurance companies to ensure that the basic structure of a property is sound, a structural inspection survey prior to purchase is becoming more necessary. Property auctions and sealed tender bids may also dictate the need for a structural appraisal as part of any planned purchase.

Whether it is an inspection of one particular aspect of the structure which is in doubt, or a more detailed assessment of the whole building that is required PETERS ASSOCIATES (RIPON) LTD are able to deal quickly and effectively with either.

The Investment

Our experience over the past few years has shown that properties with suspected structural defects become extremely difficult to sell. Often these problems come to light at the time of the property's intended disposal, with older properties the most vulnerable.

In these cases the investment value of the property becomes doubtful with a lengthy sale and disposal of the house the inevitable result.

With our knowledge of building structures, methods of construction and materials we are able to contribute to maintaining the security and value of the investment.

The Visual Inspection Survey

There are a number of steps that we take when arranging for an inspection of a property, namely:

- A brief is initially discussed and agreed with either the vendor or the purchaser as the client, the details of the brief will have a bearing on the agreed fees for the inspection.
- We arrange access and confirm the time of our inspection.

- Following the visual inspection, an initial telephone discussion of our observations is held with the client; such early discussion can assist with purchase negotiations. Significant cost savings can result at this stage in the event that our findings invalidate the intended purchase, as time spent unnecessarily preparing a full written report is avoided.
- The structural inspection covers external observations of the property including the roof from ground level, together with a full internal inspection of all rooms and voids to which there is safe access.

External boundary conditions that relate to structure and which form part of the property are also inspected, these may include retaining walls, sloping sites, embankments and trees etc.

- If necessary the inspection can provide initial advice on planned structural alterations to the property which will be implemented as and when the property is acquired.

In accepting any structural inspection of a property clearly the establishment of a detailed brief is a vital ingredient in providing a report that meets accurately the client's needs. We therefore use our experience in this respect to assist the client in achieving his requirements.

Technical Appraisal

Our inspection survey is principally concerned with the structure of the property, we would comment on any visible cracking internally and externally and likely subsidence, in addition we are fully able to accurately monitor a structure over a period of time for continuing movement.

Our report would assess the significance of any visible structural movement which may have occurred historically in older buildings.

We carry a damp meter and would comment on rising damp in walls or damp penetration of the structure generally.

We would also comment upon any visible rot or infestation of timbers to floors or roofs and may recommend treatment or further inspections by a specialist company.

Regarding drainage we would ascertain whether a connection to the main drainage system exists, or whether septic tanks or soakaways are present. A detailed condition inspection of the below ground hidden drainage is not normally carried out but can be organized if required by involving further specialist companies.

We are not service engineers and are therefore not qualified to comment in detail on electrical, gas or water installations. However if required, we can make general observations on the visual condition of these items, and we can arrange for these to be inspected by service engineers.

Derelict Buildings

In recent years the refurbishment of derelict buildings has become increasingly popular, in particular the renovation of redundant farm buildings such as barns or stables.

Before embarking on an investment such as this a detailed structural survey of the existing building is recommended, indeed this is becoming a prerequisite by the Planning Authority in support of any application for Change of Use.

PETERS ASSOCIATES (RIPON) LTD have considerable experience in this type of survey, and are able to advise on any structural repairs which may be required to such buildings to ensure that a sound long term investment is achieved.

The Report

A detailed and concise structural report is provided written in straightforward language. This report, whilst prepared for the immediate client, can also be used in support of applications to lending institutions and insurance companies.

The report will include conclusions and recommendations where appropriate. We would also offer budget estimates for any structural repairs, should these costs be required by the client.

Fees

Fixed fee quotations are offered based upon us having established a brief and having fully appreciated the size and type of property being dealt with, alternatively fees can be charged on a time basis up to a maximum quoted figure.

We are therefore able to offer variable fees to suit the client's budget and particular needs.

Peters Associates (Ripon) Ltd

Consulting Structural and Civil Engineers

Queens House □ Lavender Alley □ Old Market Place □ Ripon □ North Yorkshire HG4 1EB
Tel: (01765) 607291 □ Fax: (01765) 607295 □ e-mail: ripon@petersassociates.net

For Domestic Structural Inspections

- 1.0 We will carry out a visual structural inspection of those parts of the property which are accessible. This means visible and readily available for examination from ground and floor levels, without risk of causing damage to the property or injury to the person carrying out the inspection. Due care is therefore exercised throughout the inspection regarding safety, practicality and the constraints of being a visitor to the property, which may be occupied.
- 2.0 We will not therefore inspect areas that are covered, unexposed or inaccessible. Roof voids will only be entered if there is safe, boarded access. We will not lift sarking felt, move large items of furniture, lift carpets, floor boards or manhole covers, or dig below ground level unless specifically agreed in writing before carrying out the inspection.
- 3.0 We will comment specifically on principal elements of structure and any visible defects that may affect the building fabric. Leisure facilities (such as pools), outbuildings and boundary fences or walls will be noted but not examined, unless specifically agreed in writing.
- 4.0 External elevations and the roof will be viewed from ground level, using binoculars where necessary.
- 5.0 In the case of flats, external surfaces of the building containing the property are inspected, roof spaces are inspected if there is a hatch within the flat.
- 6.0 Photographs of the building may be taken at the time of inspection for record purposes, but may not be included in the report. Digital photographs may be included on a CD in the appendix if requested.
- 7.0 We will not inspect plumbing, heating, electrical or gas installations, or the internal condition of any chimney, boiler or flue, and would recommend that these are inspected separately by suitably qualified people.
- 8.0 Our inspection will not research the presence, or possible consequences, of contamination of the ground or buildings by any harmful substance. Many building materials in the past have contained asbestos, and our inspection will not therefore comment upon asbestos as this cannot be readily identified by a purely visual inspection. Should the client have concerns on this aspect then we would recommend that an independent specialist survey for asbestos is commissioned.
- 9.0 Fees include all time in connection with the inspection, including arranging access, collecting and returning keys where required, travelling time, carrying out the inspection and office time in writing, printing, binding and issuing the report.
- 10.0 Our report is solely for the use of the Client and no liability to anyone else is accepted. Our report is neither an insurance nor a guarantee in respect of the property and its future performance.
- 11.0 We will consider the re-issue of the report in its original form to a third party within 6 months of the original report date for an administrative fee (currently £50.00 excluding VAT).

Upon lapse of a 6 month period the report can only be re-issued following a full re-inspection, which will attract a full survey fee.
- 12.0 We reserve the right to refuse copies of the report to any third party (other than those named above). We also reserve the right to amend our opinions in the event of additional information being made available at some future date.
- 13.0 In accepting these terms of Engagement the Client agrees to pay the fee and any other charges agreed in writing.