

## **Risk Management Guidance for Conversions**

Depending on the condition of the original building, an Experts survey is usually required for the elements below. If the Report concludes that any of these elements are unable to meet the life expectancy of 30 years for structure and 15 years for non-structural elements, they should be systematically replaced or repaired. The main report may be made up of several individual reports, such as an Engineer's report on foundations and a specialist company report on rising damp and/or timber treatment.

### **Guidance on C-R-L's Requirements:**

- The project must achieve compliance with C-R-L's requirements and the Building Regulations.
- All conversions must be registered with C-R-L at least 15 working days prior to any works commencing on site.
- Your C-R-L surveyor is unable to inspect the development until we have received all of the reports, plans, specifications etc. and carried out a desktop appraisal.
- Testing of reclaimed materials such as bricks, timbers, tiles, slates etc. may be subject to a third party test to show suitability.
- All new structural timber must be stamped KD or DRY timber

### **What are we looking for?**

In order to understand your project, we need to know as much as possible about it as soon as possible. In particular we need to see:

- Project specification – remedial proposals, plans and specifications'
- Structural engineer's report – to comment on structural adequacy of retained elements and confirm life expectancy of at least 30 years
- Experts reports – these will be in addition to the structural engineer's report and should include specialist reports on rising damp, timber infestation and fungal attack.

By providing us with the information when you notify us of the site we will be able to complete our desktop overview and arrange a site visit without delay.

Ideally the inspections for all of the expert/specialist reports should be carried out when all the relevant parts of the building are opened up. Existing plaster and other redundant

elements should have been removed e.g. at the “SOFT STRIP” stage. This will enable us to confirm our initial acceptance of the scheme. However, on larger projects it may be more practical for reports to be received by us on later stages of the building as work proceeds. If this is the case please mention it when you first register the project. This will save unnecessary questions and delay later.

### **What remedial works we expect**

- Any roof covering that is not in sound condition should be replaced. If you propose to retain any roof coverings we will need safe access so we can inspect both above and below the covering. This safe access will also be needed by your expert for their report.
- All external walls must prevent moisture penetration to the inside and be insulated to building regulation requirements. This can be achieved where walls are “drylined” with a suitable independent system, which will both insulate the fabric and prevent moisture ingress, or by the provision of an externally applied render/insulation system.
- Any habitable areas either below or partially below ground level must be provided with a minimum grade 3 tanking system or equivalent.
- All repairs and treatments identified in the expert’s and engineer’s reports.
- In addition to the contractors guarantee, min 10 year insured guarantees are required for chemical dpcs, timber treatments for insect and fungal attack, specialist roofing systems and proprietary externally applied weather proofing/insulation systems. Rising damp and timber treatments must be carried out by a BWPDA member.
- Windows, doors and internal services should be replaced to modern standards.
- All cavity walls must have a boroscope inspection and the report passed to C-R-L Surveyor to determine the condition of the cavity wall ties and any possible defects that exist. Such insured guarantees are available from the Guarantee Protection Administration Limited. In addition to the guarantees, certified copies of invoices, reports & plans indicating the areas treated must be supplied.

### **Guidance on experts reports for retained elements**

A full structural report of the existing building as described in BRE Digest 366 including:

- Foundations
- Any basements

- Suspended timber floors, including joist ends, wall plates and ventilation
- Ground bearing slabs
- External and internal walls, including lintels and any built-in timber
- Intermediate floor, including, for timber, the condition of any built-in joist ends, wall plates and floor coverings
- Any structural concrete (incl. carbonation) / steel frame
- Roof structures, including wall plates, joist ends, valley/parapet gutters
- Chimneys and parapets
- Report on investigations regarding rising damp, insect infestation and fungal decay. The report should be compiled by a suitably qualified expert (e.g. Certified Surveyor for Remedial Treatment).
- Weather resistance of walls including claddings, render, re-pointing, parapets and chimneys etc.
- Report on any retained roof coverings, including adequacy of fixings from above and below
- External doors and windows
- External and Internal services

*If the elements are to be replaced no report is necessary.*

### **Green Timber/ Ungraded timbers**

- The use of green timber/ ungraded timbers are not permitted as structural members e.g. intels, beams, joists, rafters, purlins etc, nor where they are aesthetic elements but are “fixed” to the structure, as the extent of their shrinkage is unknown and can lead to structural damage of the property.
- They can be used as lintels providing an allowance is made for any possible shrinkage and / or swelling of the timber.

In addition to the installer guarantee, the Builder is required to provide a 10 year insured certificate/guarantee:

- (a) for chemical damp-proof course and basement tanking
  - (b) timber treatment against insect and fungal attack,
  - (c) specialist roofing systems
  - (d) proprietary externally applied weather-proofing and/or insulation systems.
- Where some of the timber elements are new and replaced as part of the conversion/refurbishment no report is necessary.

**The treatment should be:**

- Carried out by a specialist contractor and supervised by a CSRT or ASRT qualified surveyor. All BWPDA contractors meet this specification.
- Be the subject of a suitable insured guarantee. An insured guarantee will meet the following minimum requirements:
  - (i) A certificate of insurance (not a warranty or guarantee or (insurance backed 'guarantee')) will be issued specifying the insured property.
  - (ii) This insurance certificate shall be issued by a UK registered and regulated insurance company.
  - (iii) Insurance carried IPT (Insurance Premium Tax) NOT VAT.

**The guarantee itself should:**

- Cover failure of the work and consequent opening up and making good.
- Remain valid for a period of 20 years and be automatically transferred to subsequent purchasers/successors in title.

## Flow Chart

