

Reply to: **Hampshire**

Mr J Irish
JI ARCHITECTS
5 Butt Street
Minchinhampton
Gloucestershire GL6 9JP

10th December 2025

Our Ref : JRB/MP : 25.698

Visual inspection at :

Hartley Court, Hartley Court Road, Three Mile Cross, RG 7 1NW

1. Introduction

An instruction was received from Mr John Irish for Pattern Associates Limited to undertake a visual inspection of the existing building at the address above. The basis of this report was to inspect the fire-damaged structure and determine if any fabric required stabilisation or temporary propping before removal of burnt and damaged debris.

We have not made any exploratory holes unless noted in this report. We have not inspected other parts of the structure that are considered unexposed or inaccessible, and therefore, we are unable to report that any such part of the structure is free from defect.

A visual inspection was undertaken by Jeff Brown of Pattern Associates Limited on Wednesday, 3rd December 2025; the weather was clear and cold. The following notes and photographs were taken.

This report is to be read in conjunction with the fire damage drawing Nos. HC-01, 02 & 03 prepared by JI Architects.

2. Property Details

The property is a three-storey detached dwelling and is listed by the NHLC. It is of traditional construction and has a dual-pitch roof and is covered with clay plain tiles. The external walls are of masonry

construction with a render external finish. The property sits within large grounds, and access is via a private road from a gated entrance off Hartley Court Road.

The fire-damaged parts of the building are concentrated around the North East corner of the building on all three floors, including the roof structure. The fire damage is more extensive on the second floor and has spread to other areas of the roof structure.

3. Inspection

Inspection was carried out on the external and internal areas within the dwelling around the areas highlighted above. It should be noted that the heavily fire-damaged areas were not accessible. The following observations and photographs were carried out.

EXTERNALLY

The external walls up to roof level appeared not to have been badly damaged with no visible cracks or stress to the fabric; the first floor and roof structure had all gone. But generally, the ground to first first-floor external walls was in a stable condition. (Photographs 1 & 2)

It was noted that there was a crack in the internal surface of the North Facing external wall at first-floor level over an existing opening alcove; however, this crack is thought to have predated the fire and was caused by deflection in the timber lintel over the alcove. (Photograph 3)

As stated, the roof construction over the point of the fire was all gone; however, the roof structure over the South East and North West rooms was badly charred, and some of the rafters, ceiling joists and purlins were missing. These remaining parts of the damaged roof structure still supported areas of roof tiles. (Photographs 4, 5 & 6)

There are four tall chimney stacks remaining, which are built within the internal wall between the North East / West rooms. These stacks appeared to be true and vertical with no noticeable signs of cracking within the face brickwork or heat damage. (Photographs 7 & 8)

INTERNALLY

The main entrance hall and ground to the first-floor staircase had minor damage due to the fire. However, the first-to-second-floor staircase is badly damaged, and the second-floor landing was also badly affected. The first and second floor rooms West of the four main chimney stacks were badly damaged, the timber beams being very badly damaged. It was noted that one of the oak charred beams is built within and below the end chimney stack, and the stack above this beam corbels outwards. It is thought that this beam, although badly charred, probably has some integrity within the oak beam, but how much is difficult to determine, as access was not possible. (Photographs 9 & 10)

There is a single brick skin gable wall above the first to second floor staircase, which is now not supported laterally due to the whole section of the roof having been destroyed. (Photographs 11 & 12)

4. Conclusion

Looking at the damage to the roof structure, it is very unlikely that any of the fire-affected roof areas can be salvaged and should be removed together with the remaining areas of plain tiles/ battens.

When safe access is available, the badly charred beam below the chimney stack should be tested to see how much timber core remains; however, due to the extent of the damage, it is likely that this beam will be replaced.

It will be difficult to brace the exposed single skin gable wall above the first to second floor staircase; this gable wall, being unsupported, is dangerous in its current situation and could fall during the clean-up stage.

5. Recommendation

Provide temporary propping via acrow-type struts from the internal wall below the corbel stack up to and above the charred beam, as suggested to stabilise the projecting stack structure. The small gable wall to the staircase well should be demolished down to the roof wall plate level. The first to second floor staircase is to be removed, and possibly the second floor landing and replaced with scaffolding and a temporary staircase to allow access to the second floor.

It is suggested that if access is available to the presently inaccessible damaged areas, then if further structural investigation is required then contact should be made to arrange another visit.

Yours Sincerely

J R Brown

Photograph 1 & 2 -Front elevation (East Facing)





Photograph 3 – Possible historic crack in wall over alcove



Photograph 4, 5 & 6—fire damaged roof structure





Photograph 7 & 8- Four chimney stacks





Photograph 9 & 10- Oak beam – corbel chimney stack





Photograph 11 & 12- Gable to stair well





First to Second floor staircase damage





External walls and point of fire damage



