

**12 WOOD LANE
HIGHGATE
LONDON N6 5UB**



**STRUCTURAL REPORT
ON
FLOOD DAMAGE**

Date of inspection

9th February 2023

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1. Introduction

We were appointed by Lily Thomson of 12 Wood Lane, London N6 5UB to report on the water damage to the ceilings at the property.

Our report is concerned only with this structural issue, all other aspects of the property are outside our report.

No exposing work was carried out and our observations are based on a visual inspection only.

Our report is prepared for the use of the above named client and her insurers in connection with a claim and is not to be relied upon by third parties without our specific written authorisation.

Our report is to be read in conjunction with documents prepared by Watson Bertram and Fell Architects.

2. General Comments

The water damage originated from a burst pipe joint in the attic above the staircase. The top stair flight is just to the rear of the main cross wall, and the affected ceilings are generally in the rear rooms, except at top floor level where all the ceilings have been affected.

The ceilings are mostly lath and plaster, and the damage has been caused partly by the soaking of the plaster which has weakened it so that it has lost its key to the timber laths, and also the pressure of water sitting within the ceiling voids which has pushed the plaster off the laths, and the laths away from the joists. Where visible the nails holding the laths to the joints are rusty and several laths can be seen to have come adrift.

We made an assessment of the ceilings by hand to see whether there is any movement indicating that the plaster has separated from the structure, in other words whether the plaster is 'live'. This forms the basis of my recommendations below.

In this situation it is not uncommon for ceilings to appear sound but to collapse after the final drying out and central heating of the house. The wetting and drying of old plaster can cause it to become ever more friable, and lose the remaining key to the laths.

Where boards were lifted at first floor it could be seen that the plaster key above the laths was missing in places due to age and perhaps the attention of tradesmen over the years. This has made the ceilings more vulnerable to floods than they were when new.

I have not seen anything to suggest more significant underlying structural issues caused by the flooding. Where visible the joists are generously sized.

3. Recommendations

Top Floor

All ceilings are lath and plaster. In the front bedroom approx 2/3 of the ceiling is live. In the rear bedroom approx 1/3 is live. In both cases it is the part of the ceiling nearer to the staircase that is affected. The ceilings of the stairwell (directly under the flood) and the central bathroom are also live.

I recommend that the live areas of ceiling are replaced in lath and plaster, including new timber laths with stainless steel fixings.

First Floor

In the rear master bedroom a large part of the ceiling has collapsed and the laths have also come away from the joists. This has affected about 75% of the ceiling (nearest to the central wall). I recommend that this should be replaced in lath and plaster, with new timber laths, and including replacement of the cornice, moulded from the existing. It is not practical to cut around the cornice as this would leave unsupported ends of laths.

In the front bedroom there is some water damage to the ceiling. This is a replacement plasterboard ceiling. The dampness will have affected the grip of the plasterboard nails. I recommend under-boarding with screwed fixings up into the joists.

The bathrooms and stairwell in the side wing have not been affected by the flood.

Ground Floor

In the rear living room there is extensive water damage. Approximately 80% of the ceiling is affected, leaving only about 20% nearest to the rear wall.

I recommend replacing the ceiling and cornice in the affected area, as described above.

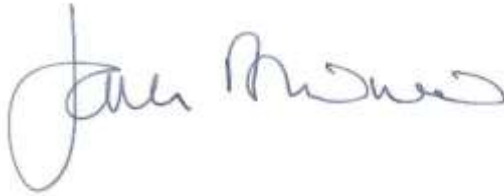
In the front room there is a very small amount of water staining. This ceiling requires only decorative repairs.

The stairwell and rear room in the side wing have not been affected.

Lower Ground Floor

There is no significant flood damage to these ceilings, which are believed to be plasterboard false ceilings set below the original lath and plaster.

We will be pleased to answer any questions on this report.



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