Structural Appraisal

of

2 Manchester Road
Chorlton-cum-Hardy

for

Olivia & Martin Edge

Ref: B116

January 2026

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	Written By:	Checked By:	Date:
First Issue	-CB-O	-	2.2.26

1. Introduction

Manchester City Council have responded to a planning application for the demolition of No 2 Manchester Road and the construction of a new dwelling on the site. Their minute of the panel meeting stated;

The Panel noted the positive contribution that the existing building makes to the conservation area and stated that demolition should be avoided. They were advised of the poor condition of the building and asked for a conservation accredited structural engineer to carry out a full structural assessment and feasibility study, as they should try to retain it and carry out the necessary repairs. The Panel acknowledged that there may be a lot of repair works but advised that elements could be rebuilt if necessary if it would retain the existing building on the site.

The report addresses the request.

2. Inspection

The building was inspected by Charles Blackett-Ord CEng FICE CARE and Amy Rooke CEng MICE on 15 January 2026. It was a bright sunny day. The building was opened up by the owner.

This report has been prepared for the sole use of Olivia and Martin Edge, their agents and statutory authorities. It is not to be relied upon by any third party and shall not be distributed to other parties, other than statutory authorities or insurers, without the consent of Blackett-Ord Conservation Ltd.

We have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure which are covered unexposed or inaccessible and we are therefore unable to report that any such part of the property is free from defect.

The south and north walls age partly obscured by ivy.

3. General Description

No 2 Manchester Road is a three-storey detached domestic dwelling in its own garden at the junction of Manchester Road and High Lane in Chorlton-cum Hardy. It was built at the time of the development of the area for housing in the late nineteenth century.

The house has suffered from foundation failure over a considerable period and at least from 1959 from when a photograph shows distortions in the front elevation. The movement has continued since then.

For the purposes of this report the house is assumed to be facing west.

4. Previous Reports

We have seen previous structural reports as follows:

Structural Surveys – June 2024 (Prior to purchase)

Bell Munro Consulting Ltd– April 2025. (BMC)

And we have seen the Significance Assessment by JW Conservation and the Design and Access Statement by CB3 Design.

The Structural Surveys Report was summarised in the BMC report as follows:

> *Significant historic subsidence affecting the entire structure, evidenced by severe distortion and substantial tilting of external walls and internal floors.*
> *• Severe inward and outward tilting of walls accompanied by widespread structural cracking, some categorised as severe enough to suggest the need for localised rebuilding or underpinning.*
> *• Extensive and significant distortion of suspended timber floors at all levels, considered structurally severe and practically irreparable due to the building-wide nature of deformation.*
> *• Notable structural instability at roof level, severe deflections, distortion, and widespread deterioration of roof coverings causing significant damp ingress.*
> *• Widespread water ingress and damp penetration through external walls, significant internal plaster deterioration, fungal decay (potentially dry rot), and timber defects throughout.*
> *• Suspected significant defects in the original underground drainage system, requiring specialist CCTV inspection due to risks of ongoing water escape affecting ground stability.*
> *• Severe structural distortions, extensive cracking, and persistently damp conditions at basement level, indicative of major structural issues necessitating extensive remedial action.*

The Bell Munro Consulting Report includes measurements of distortions etc with which we agree, so they are not all repeated here.

This appraisal should be read with these previous reports

5. Structural Defects

5.1 Foundations

All the external walls have suffered settlement.

The reason for this has not been established and no site investigation has been carried out. However old maps (1848 Ordnance Survey) show the Leech Gutter crossing the site from north-east to south-west. We don't know if this was culverted or diverted when the area was developed for housing. It does not appear on the 1893 edition Ordnance Survey. We have looked at adjacent houses which are of a similar age to No2 but there are no obvious signs of a similar problem elsewhere.

The foundations are deep because of the cellar. There is a built-in iron beam in the base of the southeast wall of the cellar, but it is not known if this is associated with the original foundations or is some form of underpinning.

5.2 Loadbearing Walls

The external walls are built of solid brick with stone dressings. The whole building is tipped towards the north by about 2 degrees (1 in 30) but also twisted such that the south wall tips towards the west and the north wall towards the east. As a result of this movement there is structural cracking in all four elevations.

The west (front) wall has a cracked lintel over the front door arising from differential movement in each side of the house, and there is movement cracking over the bay window.

The south wall has vertical cracks at first floor level above the ground floor left window lintel end.

The east (rear) wall has a vertical line of failure with cracking and brick displacements over its full height. This corresponds with the failure in the opposite west wall showing a line of failure through the hall and stairs.

5.3 Basement

The basement has a solid floor and is uneven, but it is difficult to draw any conclusions from the varying levels because basement floors are often laid to falls. The basement was dry at the time of the inspection, in that there was no standing water. The walls were damp as would be expected.

5.4 Ground Floor

The ground floor is suspended timber. The floors slope with the general tipping of the building although an attempt has been made to overlay them to give a level surface. This process is complicated by door openings and the preference to have all rooms on any one floor at the same level.

5.5 First Floors

The first-floor slopes in a similar manner to the ground floor and the same comments apply. A further complication to levelling up is the staircase and the need for the risers in any one flight to be equal.

5.6 Roof

The roof was not inspected. There is some leakage, but the main defect is rotten barge boards on the front elevation. The slating is in poor condition.

5.7 Chimneys

The north chimney stack has been rebuilt with its upper part vertical. All the chimneys need capping or their top brick courses reset.

5.8 Drainage

The drains have not been inspected.

6. Repair Recommendations

Mini-piled underpinning is required to all the walls, including the internal walls, which extend the full height of the building. This work could be done from inside the basement using cantilevered ground beams to avoid extensive excavation externally. The depth of the piles can only be confirmed by site investigation.

The outward leaning north wall should be tied back to the internal cross wall because there is a risk of instability where the outside wall leans out by as much as its thickness.

The fault line through the building is more difficult to deal with because it is a natural line of weakness and tying it across could simply push cracks elsewhere. Tie rods would need to be inserted through the full width of the building with pattress on the outside walls at each floor level.

Overlaying the floors to make them level has been done in the past, but the extent of the make-up causes problems with the door openings and stairs, so completely new floors set level would be the preference.

7. Conclusions

The principal defect is the foundations. There has been differential settlement of up to around 250 mm such that the floors slope a similar amount across the building. As well as the whole building having tipped to the north there is a line of failure through the building on the line of the hallway/stairs. There is no reason to believe that the movement has stopped, although long term monitoring would confirm this, because there have clearly been ongoing repairs over many years. The photograph of 1959 clearly shows distortion having occurred before that date. It is indeed probable that the movement started shortly after construction. As a timeline assessment suggests: the building was built around 1880, the photo shows a problem in 1959, eighty years later, and the movement is still continuing 65 years after that.

Over the years window cills and lintels have been reset to take account of movement, a chimney has been rebuilt straight, and floors have been made up to level by overlaying. All this will be a continuing process unless the foundations are stabilised. Stabilisation will not of course put the house back to where it was. The floors will still slope, and the walls will still lean.



Charles Blackett-ord CEng FICE CARE

Engineer Accredited in Conservation.

8. List of Photos

Photo 1: Front Elevation

Photo 2: Front Elevation Eaves - Showing Extent of Movement

Photo 3: East Wall Cracking

Photo 4: South Wall Cracking

Photo 5: Crack in Cellar Wall

Photo 6: Embedded Beam Under Cellar Wall

Photo 7: North Side Chimney

Photo 8: North Gable - Note: lintel set unevenly

Photo 9: Slope on Floor

Photo 10: Slope on Floor



Photo 1: Front Elevation



Photo 2: Front Elevation Eaves – Showing extent of movement



Photo 3: East Wall Cracking



Photo 4: South Wall Cracking



Photo 5: Crack in Cellar Wall



Photo 6: Embedded Beam Under Cellar Wall



Photo 7: North Side Chimney



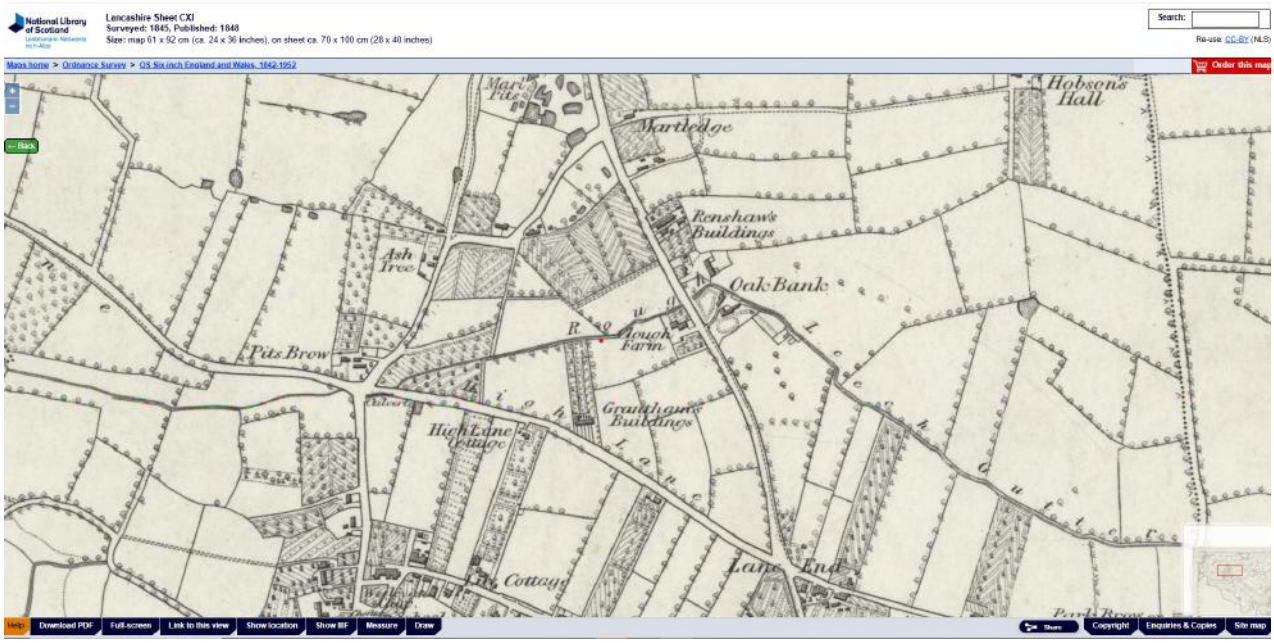
Photo 8: North Gable - Note: lintel re-set unevenly



Photo 9: Slope on Floor



Photo 10: Slope on Floor

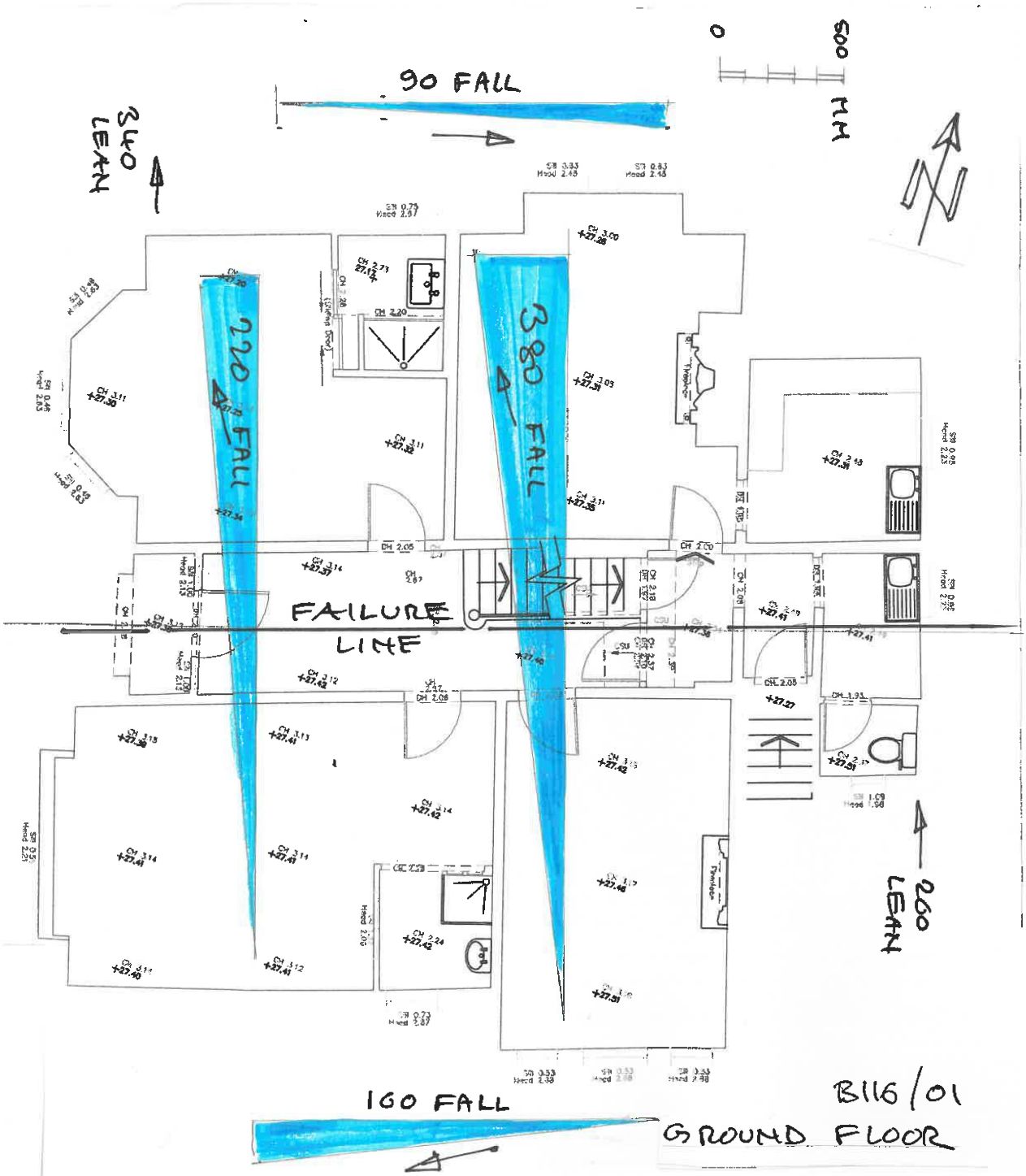


Plan showing the Leech Gutter

9. List of Drawings

01 Ground Floor

02 Elevations



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LINE OF FAILURE
Approx SFL 33.85
Approx FFL 30.77
Approx GFL 27.37
Datum 25.00m
Elevation 1
LINE OF FAILURE
Approx SFL 33.85
Approx FFL 30.77
Approx GFL 27.37
Datum 25.00m
Elevation
B116/02
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