



Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo
Mayo County Council

Westport Convent Campus, Westport, Co. Mayo

Condition Report Proposed Library Building

7011-603-002-R02

July 2023



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**DOCUMENT APPROVAL**

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CONTENTS

1. DATA USED IN THE REPORT [REFERENCES].....1

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY1

3. SURVEY1

3.1. Scope.....1

3.2. Executive Summary.....2

3.3. Site.....2

3.3.1. The Site2

3.3.1. General Environmental Factors2

3.4. Exterior2

3.4.1. Main Walls2

3.4.2. Windows.....3

3.4.3. Exterior Doors3

3.4.4. Chimney Stacks3

3.4.5. Roof Structure3

3.4.6. Gutters and Downpipes4

3.4.7. Eaves, Fascia, Soffits4

3.5. Interior.....5

3.5.1. Roof Structure5

3.5.2. Ceilings5

3.5.3. Walls, Partitions and Plasterwork5

3.5.4. Fireplaces, Flues and Chimney Breasts5

3.5.5. Floors5

3.5.6. Internal Doors6

3.5.7. Staircases6

4. Notes and Exclusions.....7

Appendix A:

Photographic Survey

7011-603-002-R02

CONTENTS

July 2023

1. DATA USED IN THE REPORT [REFERENCES]

The following documents and drawings have been used in this report, and are referenced in the text by the number assigned in square brackets [*].

Project Information

[P1] Gordon Knaggs & Associates Confidential Report – Examination of Timberwork to a former Convent Building in Westport

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

Address: Altamont Street, Westport, Co. Mayo

Brief Description: Located along the R330 at the junction with the Distillery Road, the existing structure of the proposed library building comprises of 3 storeys – 1 No. basement level and 2 No. above ground floors. The existing structure was previously utilized as a schoolhouse in the convent campus.

3. SURVEY

Jennings O'Donovan have been engaged by Mayo County Council to carry out a condition survey of the existing buildings in the Westport Convent Campus relating to the development of a new public library, civic office and community buildings project proposed for the Westport Convent Campus.

This report outlines the condition survey for the existing schoolhouse building, to be developed as part of the proposed new library. This report should be read in conjunction with the Stage 1 Report on Civil and Structural Design

3.1. Scope

Mayo County Council instructed Jennings O'Donovan to carry out a survey of the above-mentioned property and provide a report on the condition of the property subsequent to the survey. The survey was a visual survey ONLY and did not include opening up works. The scope of works is to provide a report on the civil and structural condition of the existing structure. The visual survey includes the condition of the exterior, interior, common areas and outbuildings.

3.2. Executive Summary

In general, the existing walls appear to be in a fair condition. There are instances of dry rot throughout the building with recommendations from [P1] Gordan Knaggs & Associates – *Examination of Timberwork to a Former Convent Building in Westport* - assessment report that all masonry be treated for dry rot.

The roof structure appears to be in poor condition, with considerable decay to roofing timbers noted [P1]

The substructure was unable to be assessed at this time. Further investigation to assess the existing substructure – including all foundations - to determine their adequacy is required.

3.3. Site

3.3.1. The Site

Description: The site for the convent campus comprises of 0.477 Hectares. The area immediately adjacent the existing schoolhouse building to the East is a green area which is currently overgrown with shrubbery. The Northern elevation is close to the boundary wall along the Mill Road with approximately 1.5 metres of paved ground between the building and the retaining wall. To the West of the building is a large open paved area. The pavement is in poor condition, with cracking throughout leading to vegetation growth. The South elevation (front elevation) is served by the site access road and a green area. The green is currently overgrown.

Condition: The green areas adjacent the building are overgrown with shrubbery and the paved areas are in poor condition

3.3.1. General Environmental Factors

No septic tank was noted on site – the site appears to connect into the existing public sewer at the Western boundary of the grounds, along the Mill Road.

3.4. Exterior

3.4.1. Main Walls

Description: The existing building is a 3-storey detached building – 2No. storeys above ground and 1No. storey below ground. The external walls are of masonry block construction varying from approximately 550mm to 700mm thick. It is unclear of the extent of the cavity. The masonry is clad with approximately 18mm plaster.

Condition: The plaster is cracked on all elevations specifically around window and door opens. This is an indication of minor settlement and / or thermal movement which is not uncommon for a structure of this age, these are not considered to be serious or major on-going movement. The plaster is broken in places and when lightly tapped with a hammer produced a hollow sound indicating it has detached from the masonry underneath.

Ivy has attached itself to the East and North elevations of the building covering large portions. Ivy is evident on the remaining walls to a lesser extent.

A small portion of masonry was exposed and appeared in good condition.

It is recommended that the external walls remain in place for the proposed renovation works. However, it is not recommended that any new structural loadings are placed on the existing walls. Any loadings from the proposed ground and first floor construction will significantly increase from the original loadings imposed on the walls due to the change of use of the building. This will lead to increases in localised stress concentrations that may exceed the safe bearing capacity of the existing masonry block wall.

3.4.2. Windows

Description: The majority of windows (and doors) are boarded up to prevent / discourage trespassing. Windows are timber frame with single pane glass.

Condition: Many windows are showing signs of decay and rot – refer to [P1].

3.4.3. Exterior Doors

Description: Exterior doors appear to be of wooden construction

Condition: Exterior doors are visually damaged and in poor condition. Doors are showing signs of decay and rot – refer to [P1].

3.4.4. Chimney Stacks

Description: There is a double flue chimney along the Northern elevation of the building

Condition: The stack appears to be in good condition

It is recommended that the chimney stack be kept as part of the proposed renovation works. Any alterations to the roof structure or chimney stack throughout the building should be carried out with appropriate temporary bracing / support as needed. It is likely that the existing roof and first floor structures are fixed to the chimney stack, therefore providing lateral stability.

3.4.5. Roof Structure

Description: Hip and valley type with slated finish

Condition: The roof structure is in a poor condition, a number of slates are missing, considerable decay to roof timbers and water ingress noted in Gordon Knaggs & Associates report – refer to [P1]

The roof structure is formed of five queen post trusses on corbels, purlins, and common rafters. The principal rafters are 175mm x 75mm, bottom chord 230mm x 90mm. Timber grade is C24. Common rafters are 125mm x 35mm approx. and are grade C16.

Exact measurements of spacings and spans could not have been safely obtained, however, estimates are made from the photographic survey. The spacing of the rafters is approximately 300mm, with a purlin supported by the queen post trusses splitting

the span of the rafters. The rafters span from eaves to roof ridge - approximately 6.9m (based off survey of existing building provided by MCC). This gives an average span for the rafters of 3.45m. Review of SWiFT 6:2013 Timber in Construction – Span tables and guidelines, gives a maximum span of 2.59m for C16 grade 125mm x 35mm rafters. The excessive spans of the existing rafters combined with the considerable decay of roofing timbers noted in Gordon Knaggs & Associates report results in a recommendation that the roof structure is replaced as part of the renovation works.

A closer examination of the existing queen post trusses should be carried out during construction to determine if they can be salvaged in their current state.

3.4.6. Gutters and Downpipes

Description: Gutter and downpipes appear to be of cast iron construction

Condition: Several down pipes are rusted through and broken, a close inspection of the gutters was not possible, however, from the ground it could be seen that sections of the gutters have broken off and other sections are blocked up

3.4.7. Eaves, Fascia, Soffits

Description: A close inspection of the eaves, fascia and soffit was not possible, however, the soffit appeared to be open ventilated for the roof structure.

Condition: A close inspection was not possible – refer to [P1]

3.5. Interior

3.5.1. Roof Structure

Description: The roof comprises of 5No. queen post trusses on corbels, purlins and common rafters.

Condition: Refer to [P1] and section 3.4.5 above

3.5.2. Ceilings

Description: The ceilings are plasterboard with a painted finish

Condition: The ceilings are in poor condition with damp patches visibly throughout. Wet and dry rot noted – refer to [P1]

3.5.3. Walls, Partitions and Plasterwork

Description: Ground floor walls are a mixture of masonry and timber stud partitions. The walls are finished with a mixture of paint, wainscoting, door liners and architrave.

Condition: All internal walls show signs of damage – either as a result of exploratory works or vandalism.

3.5.4. Fireplaces, Flues and Chimney Breasts

Description: An open fireplace without brickwork fire surround or chimney breast was located in the building – a stud partition has been constructed up to the face of the fireplace effectively placing a portion of the fireplace in each room either side of the stud wall. The rooms either side of the wall in question have been converted into toilet facilities.

Condition: The fireplace doesn't appear to have been utilised during the later stages of the schoolhouse owing to the positioning of the fireplace in the current layout of the building. Further investigation by a suitably qualified person should be carried out to inspect and clean the flues as necessary. Adequate ventilation should be provided around the chimney flue to prevent potential problems with moisture buildup.

3.5.5. Floors

Description: The ground floor and first floor are of timber joist construction. The finishes are a mixture of carpet, timber board, and lino throughout the building. The first floor is supported on bolted beams on corbels with joists at approx. 300mm centres.

Condition: The floors are (mostly) covered with the respective finish making it impossible to assess their condition, however, there are a few areas not covered. Wet and Dry rot is noted in the floor joists [P1], with high levels of moisture measured throughout – high

levels of moisture lead to increased risk of fungal attack and insect attack. It is noted that upturned tables are placed at various locations on the first floor covering holes in the floor.

Due to the change of use of the existing building – which will substantially increase the loadings on the floors, and the poor condition of the existing floors, it is recommended that all floors are replaced with a concrete composite decking structure.

3.5.6. Internal Doors

Description: The building has timber doors throughout

Condition: Doors on the ground floor show signs of wear and tear. Some damage was noted to the several doors likely as a result of vandalism.

3.5.7. Staircases

Description: The original timber staircase and balustrade has been retained

Condition: The staircase appears to be functional

4. **Notes and Exclusions**

1. These terms and conditions form part of a contract between Jennings O'Donovan & Partners and the customer named on this report. These terms and conditions apply to the exclusion of all other terms and conditions. However, the report is objective and can be relied upon by any party that has a valid legal interest in the condition of the property, provided that interest has been notified to and acknowledged by us in writing. If required, upon payment of a reasonable administration fee we will re-issue the report, e.g. in the name of a purchaser of the property.

Important: No-one should rely on the report or make any inferences from it beyond the extent of the original instructions accepted by Jennings O'Donovan & Partners.

2. The **purpose of the inspection** and the verbal and written reports is to put the present condition and performance of the property into an overall perspective and this inspection will be undertaken by a person (the "Surveyor") who is assessed and approved by Jennings O'Donovan & Partners.
3. The report is **NOT a guarantee** that the property is free from defects other than those mentioned in the report, nor is it an insurance policy.
4. The report follows a **visual inspection of the accessible parts** of the property. Notes are taken during the inspection and these notes contain the original information to which the Surveyor refers and upon which the Surveyor relies when subsequently reporting to a client, either verbally or in writing. A written report supersedes any verbal report and should be considered fully before any legally binding decision is made in respect of any expenditure on the property.
5. This report/survey excludes checks for compliance with fire safety regulations, planning and a legal boundary check.
6. This report/survey does not cover for the presence of toxic mould/dry rot/wet rot. This is outside the scope of works and it is not feasible to check for. Where dry rot/wet rot is observed during routine inspection, it will be flagged.
7. This report/survey is not a check for compliance with building regulations and cannot be used as proof of such.
8. The inspection and report will focus on the **condition of the principal elements** of the property.
9. There will be **practical limitations** on the scope of the inspection. The Surveyor will not break out or open up the structure, lift fitted carpets, cut floorboards or move heavy or delicate furniture/appliances/shelving. Ladders are carried for access to internal attic spaces and inspection of flat roofs and structures up to a height of three metres. The Surveyor will inspect accessible and safe roof spaces, but will be unable to report that parts of the property which are covered, unexposed or otherwise inaccessible are free from defects.
10. The report will include an executive summary that will summarise the Surveyor's findings. The comments in this summary are derived from the report and must be read in conjunction with the report in its entirety.
11. Surveyors are not qualified to test or confirm the adequacy or safety of services installations. The Surveyor will report on the basis of a visual inspection of the accessible parts. We recommend that you arrange for **specialist tests** of the water supply, drains, electrical, gas and/or heating installations.
12. This is NOT a specific asbestos or other **hazardous materials** survey. The sampling and testing of asbestos containing materials or other hazardous or suspect materials lies outside the scope of the building survey. If the property was constructed prior to 2000, an asbestos survey may be required.
13. **Health and Safety** – Jennings O'Donovan & Partners and its surveyors are required to comply with Health and Safety legislation. The surveyor will assess the safety implications presented by the site and may have to restrict the scope of the inspection that is able to be carried out.

14. Surveyors are not qualified to confirm if there is **contaminated ground** within the property. Where contaminated ground is observed during the visual inspection, it will be reported. It is not possible from a visual inspection whether ground within the property is contaminated in any way.
15. No checks for pyrite or similar defects will be carried out as these are outside the scope of this report.

Appendix A

Photographic Survey



Photo 1: Ivy on External Wall



Photo 2: Windows Boarded Up

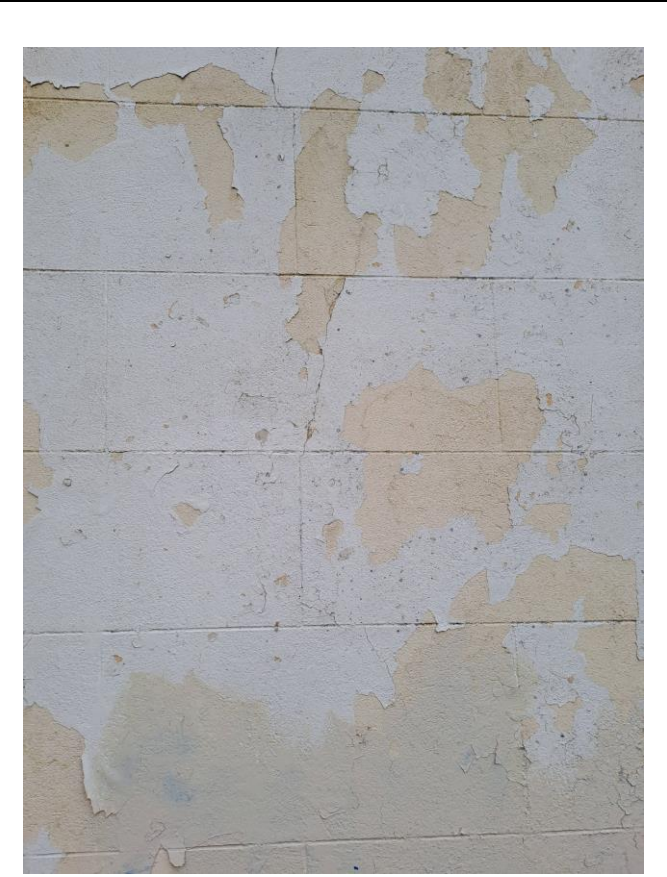


Photo 3: Cracking / Flacking of Wall Finishes



Photo 4: Downpipe Rusted and Broken



Photo 5: Cracking to Plaster

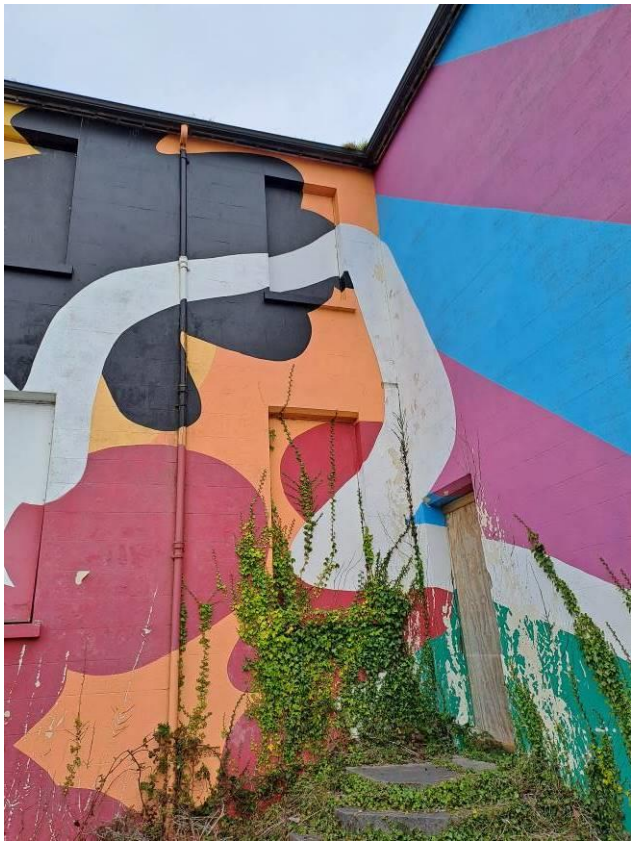


Photo 6: Ivy on External Walls



Photo 7: Gutters Blocked



Photo 8: Plaster Cracked / Broken

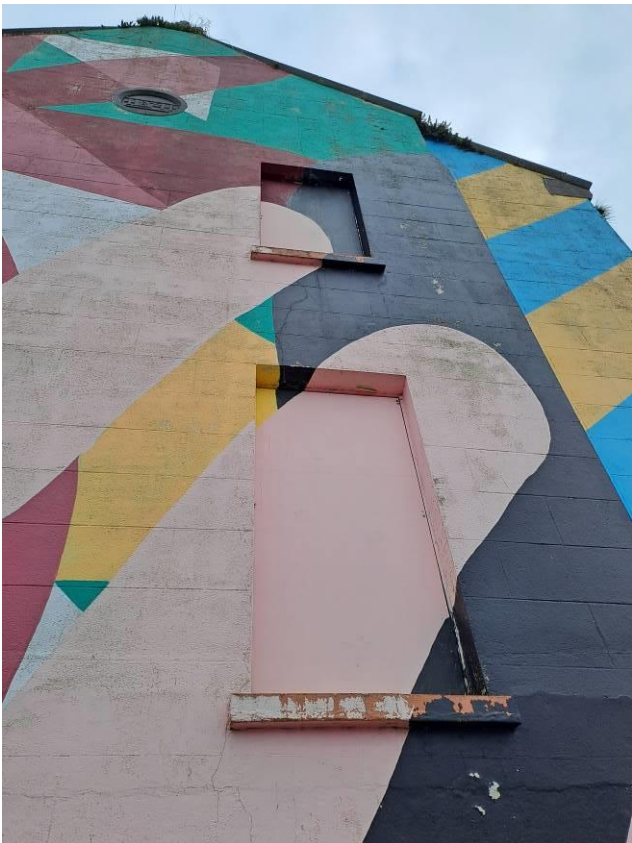


Photo 9: Cracking in Plaster around Windows



Photo 10: Plaster Broken

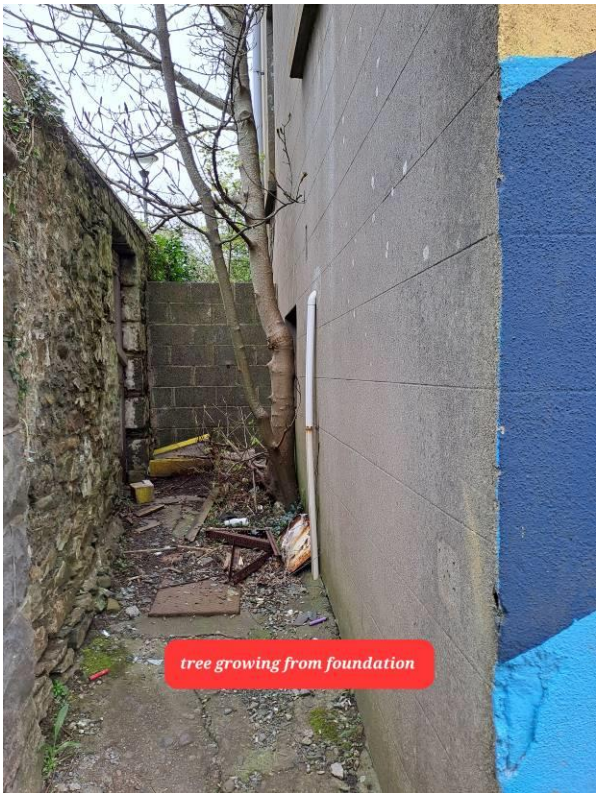


Photo 11: Tree Growing (Possibly) through Foundations



Photo 12: External Door Showing Wear and Tear

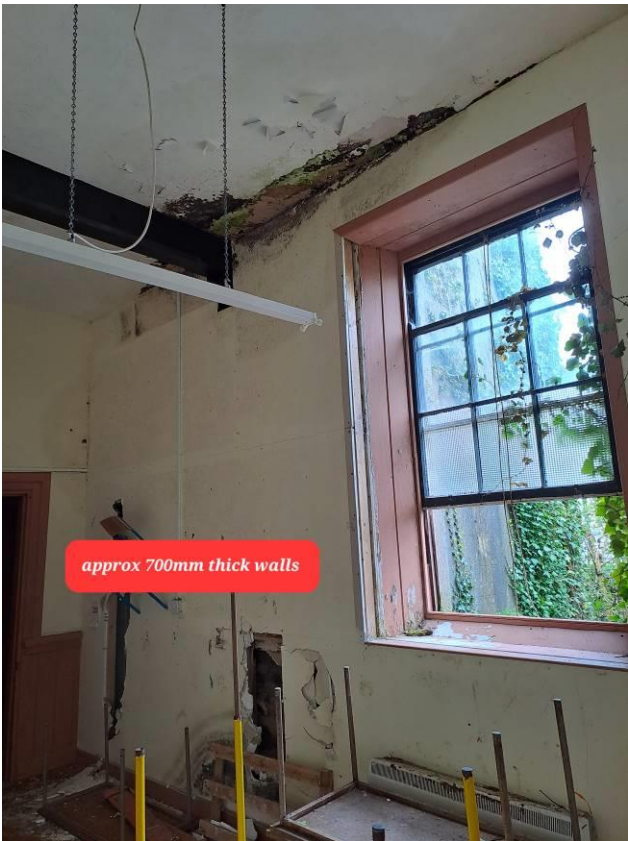


Photo 13: Damp Patch in Ceiling



Photo 14: Mould Growing on Internal Walls



Photo 15: Internal Walls Wet – Moisture Ingress



Photo 16: Staircase to Basement Level in Poor Condition



Photo 17: Mould Growth Noted



Photo 18: Fireplace Closed Off with Internal Partitions

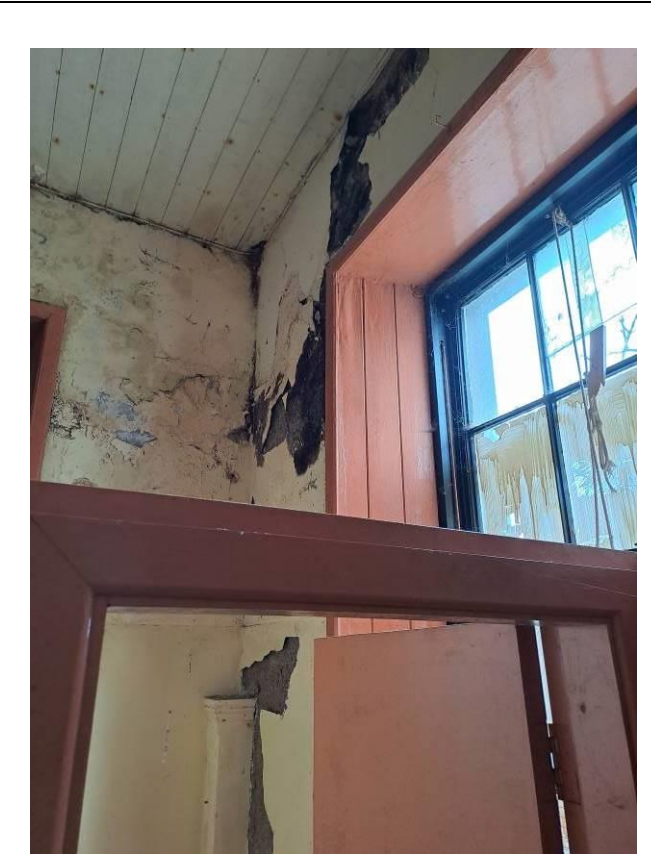


Photo 19: Mould Growth Noted

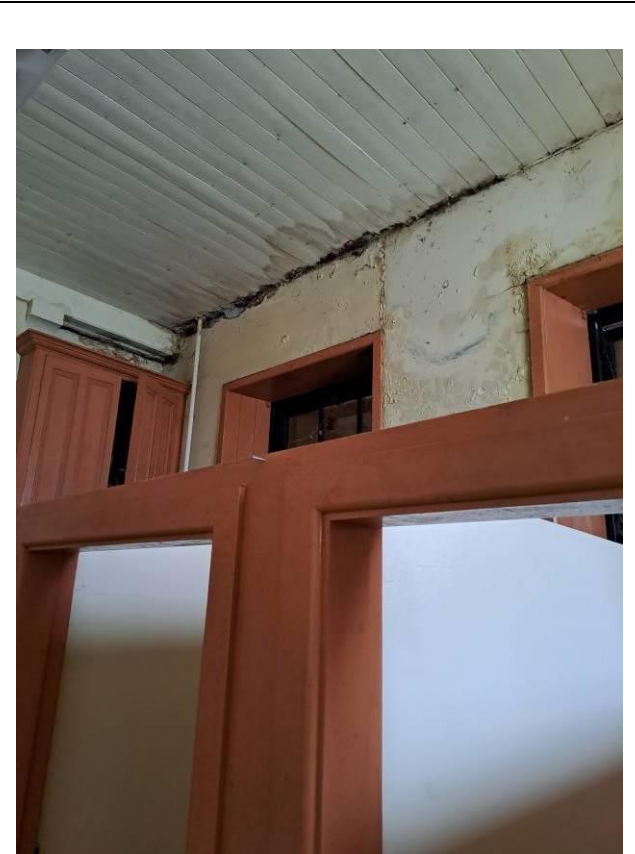


Photo 20: Damp Patch in Ceiling



Photo 21: 2 No. 100x100 SHS Sections Supporting Beams Above



Photo 22: Ceiling in Poor Condition – Hole in Ceiling Noted



Photo 23: Staircase



Photo 24: Staircase (1)

