

4.5

MAIN EXTERNAL WALLS

The main external walls look to be generally of solid brick construction and the sides and rear elevation have rendered and painted finishes. There is a small recessed section on the front elevation where the wall thickness has been reduced and is probably only 100mm. There is some modern facing brickwork to the rear projecting basement room and this is believed to be a reconstruction of an earlier single skin brick outbuilding which has now been incorporated within the living accommodation.

Structurally the main walls are currently in a relatively sound and stable condition. The house has suffered from previous structural movement and has generally settled to the rear. There are some sloping floors and walls and distorted openings. There is also some historic cracking to the brickwork close the front corner, within the garage [*Photograph 23*] Movement of this order is common in houses of this age and location where the foundation provision will be inferior to that which would be required for a new house.

The rendered and painted wall finishes look to have been attended to relatively recently and are in a good condition. However these will require regular patching and redecoration to ensure that they remain in such condition.

The facing brickwork on the front elevation is in generally good order having regards to its age but there are parts where it is wearing and the soft lime mortar could be raked out fairly easily in parts. This soft wall facing is likely to be quite porous although surprisingly the penetrating dampness problems at this property do not appear to be affecting this front wall. This is probably because the rainwater which soaks into the brickwork can dry out just as quickly ie the wall can 'breathe'. Rainwater which penetrates defective rendering will not dry out so easily and could become trapped within the walls and we believe that this is the cause of the penetrating dampness problems at this property.

Following the chopping away of the render at the base of the south west gable wall, the old brickwork beneath this has become exposed. This is in poor condition and would benefit from repair. This work could be carried out in conjunction with the