

STRUCTURAL REPORTS

All applications for the conversion of rural buildings into residential or holiday accommodation, or the reinstatement of abandoned former dwellings outside settlement limits must be accompanied by a structural report. The report must be based upon a comprehensive survey of the subject building, both internal and external, carried out by an appropriately qualified professional with adequate indemnity.

The report should take the form of a formal report, structured to comprise of the following sections/chapters:

Introduction This should summarise or précis the brief given by the applicant into the proposed development. The person who undertook the survey and prepared the report should state their professional qualification(s), unless otherwise stated elsewhere in the report, and provided confirmation of appropriate indemnity.

Location and Site Description The geographical location of the application property and relative position of the building to other adjacent buildings and landscape features need to be given. The existing or last use of the building, together with background as to its original and intervening use(s) should be provided. Any specific features unique to the building and its location should be commented on.

Existing Survey Condition The report should cover all aspects of the building form including the elements and materials of construction, foundations and floors, joinery and roof design. All areas of structural weakness need to be identified and qualified. Such areas will also need to be illustrated and annotated on the accompanying detailed plans to the application, unless a separate set is appended to the report. Similarly, any first floor or loft will need to be covered in the survey, along with the design and condition of the roof.

Proposed Scheme of Conversion All structural aspects of the building which would require replacement, reinstatement, remediation or reconstruction will need to be fully detailed, specified, and clearly shown on the submitted plans. These would include new floors and associated damp proofing, replacement door and window lintels and sills, new window and door openings, altered or new first or second floors, repair or replacement roof trusses. Alterations to exterior ground levels and landscape features, such as tree felling or re-routing of mill leats, etc need to be referred to. Extensions and their relationship to the existing building needs to be detailed.

Conclusion This should draw together the information compiled from the aforementioned sections of the report, forming a qualified professional opinion on the fabric and structural integrity of the host building and its ability to accommodate the proposed conversion.

Recommendations All structural aspects of the proposed conversion identified as requiring attention need to be referred to, along with the precise remedial and associated works needed to be undertaken. Such matters would include temporary or permanent measures to safeguard the integrity of exterior and internal walls, eg retention of the roof structure while excavating ground levels; pressure grouting of walls; reinforcement and lintel stitching of cracks; capping or casting of ring-beams to exterior walls; underpinning of walls while replacing lintels or forming new doors; measures to compensate for ground "heave" or "shrinkage" caused by the removal of trees or drainage works; etc.

Relevant applications submitted without a structural survey not complying with the above requirements and format will be likely to attract a recommendation for refusal due to the lack of substantive information