



Mr T Ray
28 Tilehouse Street
Hitchin
SG5 2DY

Date: 18 May 2026
Your Ref:
Our Ref: EWS-207473

Dear Mr Ray

Re: 28 Tilehouse Street, Hitchin, SG5 2DY

Further to my visit to the property on Thursday 14th May, 2026 I am writing with the summary of my observations with regards to the condition of the roof structure at 28 Tilehouse Street, Hitchin.

The property is a grade II listed, mid-terrace house situated within the conservation area of Hitchin. The roof covering is a pitched natural slate roof. There are three chimney stacks projecting through the roof covering. The left hand side stack (when viewed from the front) benefits from a lead flashing. The central and right hand side stack have cement mortar fillets. There are parapet walls to either side, which benefit from lead flashings.

There are a number of slipped and cracked slates to the main roof covering and repairs are considered necessary.

Some slates are showing signs of delamination when viewed internally. This is usually caused by natural weathering and frost action. This typically occurs when moisture penetrates small fissures within the slate and then expands upon freezing, leading to surface deterioration. Over time, flaking can expose the underlying layers of the slate, reducing its weather resistance and lifespan. Such flaking indicates that the slates are reaching the end of their serviceable life. You should plan for replacing the roof covering within the medium term.

The pointing to some ridge tiles appears to be deteriorating and tiles may be loose. Defective ridge tiles should be replaced, and loose pointing should be raked out and renewed at which time re-bedding may also be required. When the roof is re-covered, the cement mortar fillets to the chimney stacks should be upgraded to a more durable metal material, such as lead to reduce future maintenance liabilities.

At the time of inspection some slates were observed to have been reset in the past and restrained by the use of small metal straps (tingles). This suggests past slippage due to corrosion of the nails which secure the slates to the battens and will be a continuous maintenance problem. It is likely that slates will continue to fail during times of high wind.

When viewed internally, daylight was visible in several areas from within the main roof space. Three areas on the rear roof slope we identified. The front roof slope has sarking felt, which is deteriorating in one or two places with some minor tears and holes.

The roof structure is formed of timber rafters and purlins, with timber battens for the slate fixings. The battens have split and are deteriorating in several areas to the rear roof slope and will require replacement. The nail fixings for the existing slates have rusted and crumble when touched lightly and therefore it is anticipated that further slates will slip on the roof slope during periods of high wind and rain.

In summary, the roof covering appears to be reaching the end of its useful life and an immediate and comprehensive overhaul is now required. Complete re-covering should be anticipated in the very near future at which time you should be aware that repairs / replacements are also likely to the underlying timber battens. Although repairs are possible, it may be more economical to replace the roof covering especially if you are intending to remain occupying the property for many years to come.

Scaffolding or other means of safe access will be required to carry out repairs which will increase the cost significantly and you should budget accordingly. Permission may be needed from the neighbour to undertake these works.

As mentioned earlier, the property is a Listed Building and in a Conservation Area. You should seek advice from the local conservation officer before carrying out repairs and replacements to roof coverings as restrictions are likely to be in place and permission may be required.

I trust this information is of some help but if I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

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