

## **GUIDE TO SEARCHES ON A PROPERTY PURCHASE**

As your legal representative, we will commission various searches in respect of the property you wish to buy and will provide you with any information revealed. If there is a Home Information Pack available with the property some of the searches may be in the pack. However the usefulness and reliability of those searches will depend on who has provided them and their age. Essential searches for any prudent buyer are:-

- Local Land Charges Search
- Enquiries of the Local Authority
- Drainage & Water Search
- Environmental Search

### **Local and Land Charges Search**

This search will reveal public charges against the property, for example, where the Local Authority has spent money on, say, street works or maintenance of sewer and drains and the existing owner has not paid any money due for such works. Many of these charges do not have to be disclosed by the seller of the property and will only be revealed by making a Local Land Charges Search. Such charges will pass to successive owners of the property if arrangements are not made to have the charge paid by the seller before completion of the sale. By making a search we can ensure that any charges are paid.

### **Enquiries of the Local Authority**

These enquiries will reveal in respect of the property that you wish to buy:

- Certain Development plans for roads that the Local Authority may have in the immediate vicinity of the property, for example, road schemes within 200 metres
- Whether or not the Local Authority has adopted the road (i.e. will maintain it at their expense) on which the property adjoins
- Any infringement of building regulations
- Whether the property is affected by any Planning Applications, listed building applications or permissions and any applications or permissions concerning conservation area consents
- Contravention of planning control

### **Environmental Search**

Recent legislation has made the clean-up of land contaminated by harmful substance an issue for homeowners and their lenders. Quite simply, if the person who caused the contamination cannot be found or is unable to clean-up the contamination, the liability to do so falls on the owner and, in certain circumstances, the lender (if there is one). The cost of dealing with any contamination could be substantial and financially crippling. A property affected by contamination may be harder, or even impossible, to sell and its value will be adversely affected. It is therefore important that we enquiries are made to establish the likelihood of the property being contaminated. In addition, your lender will want to be assured that there is no contamination. The search should reveal any past usage that might raise environmental issues affecting the property.

**We are not qualified to advise you on the environmental search results, however, the search will include details of people who may be able to help you.**

### **Water Authority Search**

This search will reveal:

- Whether foul drainage and surface water from the property drains into a public or private sewer and the approximate run of the pipes and drains – this will help you determine whether public services run beneath existing buildings or are in the path of any new buildings proposed by you.
- The existence or absence of any agreement to adopt the sewers by the Local Authority
- If the property is connected to the mains water supply
- Whether or not the sewerage and water is metered

### **Other Searches**

We may recommend a number of additional searches having regard to the location of the property such as:-

- Cheshire Brine Search
- Coal Mining Search
- Common Land Search
- Land Registry Index Map Search
- Tin Mining Search

**IMPORTANT NOTE - these searches will not necessarily provide information in respect of neighbouring properties – particularly the Local Authority search which only provides information from their records in respect of the property you are buying – not your neighbours. Please call and ask for our advice if you wish us to extend the scope of our enquiries to other properties in the vicinity of the property you are buying such as recent applications for planning consents etc – this will involve additional expense but may be worthwhile.**

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