

How will your new country house 'work'?

No-one buys a new property without a structural building survey. However, few people focus on how a country house actually 'works'. Here are some of the key areas that you can 'survey' to get a good picture of how well the practical elements are working and what you may need to upgrade.

Key areas to survey.

Networking and internet. Will you be purchasing rural seclusion at the cost of very slow internet? It is vital to check the existing broadband connectivity and the status of plans for fibre-optic upgrades. Anything below 6 Mbps is highly unlikely to meet the needs of the modern family or allow you to work efficiently from your home. Once the main connection to the outside world is established, you also need to know how the internal network will work. A WiFi router can only distribute the signal a certain distance, so you'll probably want secondary WiFi routers and/or hard-cabling, which is more complex to install.

Energy. How is the heating controlled? If it's a tired old thermostat and time-clock you will very likely want to upgrade them. State-of-the-art, internet-connected controllers will reduce running costs and massively enhance flexibility and performance, making the most of any investment in renewable energy sources. These devices can be changed without any significant impact on the overall infrastructure of the property, but with tangible lifestyle and financial benefits.

Entertainment. Does the cabling of the house offer a reliable platform for your entertainment needs? Can you put TVs where you want them? Are the aerial and satellite dish in good order? These are simple and cheap things to fix so it's worth integrating the infrastructure in one go, to ensure they are not sources of frustration in the years to come.

Security. The more we shop online, the more deliveries we receive. Consider how straightforward it will be to make contact between interior areas of the property and the front door. If there are gates, check that the intercom works well. Is the front door bell effective or will you want to see and speak to delivery drivers via a video intercom system? It may be advisable to consider CCTV cameras at various outside points such as garages, oil tanks and garden equipment stores.

Middleton advice.

Arrange a health-check of these amenities alongside a traditional structural survey, and take them into account as part of your overall assessment of the property's value and suitability.

Thanks:

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