

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Non-Traditional Airey, Pre-Cast Concrete Panel construction House

Lincolnshire



FOR

Ms X

Prepared by:
INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS



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INTRODUCTION

Firstly, may we thank you for your instructions of Date; we have now undertaken an independent Building Survey (formerly known as a Structural Survey) of the aforementioned property. This Survey was carried out on Date.

The Building Survey takes the following format; there is an introductory section (which you are currently reading), which includes a synopsis of the building, and a summary of our findings.

We then go through a detailed examination of the property starting with the external areas working from the top of the property down, followed by the internal areas and the buildings services. We conclude with the section for your Legal Advisor and also attach some general information on the property market.

We are aware that a report of this size is somewhat daunting and almost off-putting to the reader because of this. We would stress that the purchase of a property is usually one of the largest financial outlays made (particularly when you consider the interest you pay as well).

We recommend that you set aside time to read the report in full, consider the comments, make notes of any areas which you wish to discuss further and phone us.

We obviously expect you to read the entire report but we would suggest that you initially look at the summary, which refers to various sections in the report, which we recommend you read first so that you get a general feel for the way the report is written.

As part of our service we are more than happy to talk through the survey as many times as you wish until you are completely happy to make a decision. Ultimately, the decision to purchase the property is yours but we will do our best to offer advice to make the decision as easy as possible.

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REPORT FORMAT

To help you understand our Report we utilise various techniques and different styles and types of text, these are as follows:

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

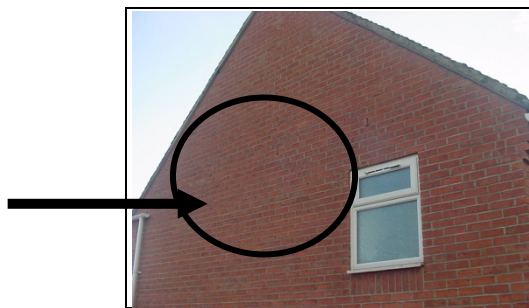
This has been given in the survey where it is considered it will aid understanding of the issues, or be of interest. This is shown in "italics" for clarity.

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

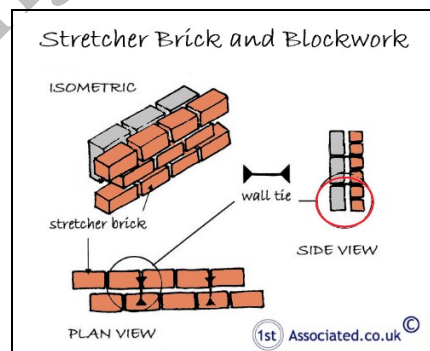
Throughout the Report, we have endeavoured to define any technical terms used. This is shown in "Courier New" typeface for clarity.

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

We utilise photographs and sketches to illustrate issues or features. In some photographs a pencil, pen, circle or arrow has been used to highlight a specific area. We also use sketches to give guidance and clarity on various issues in the property and we use them to help you understand the issues, scenarios and situations better.



Stretcher bond brickwork



Example sketch

ORIENTATION

Any reference to left or right is taken from the front of the property, including observations to the rear, which you may not be able to physically see from the front of the property.

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have used the term **ACTION REQUIRED** where we believe that there are items that you should carry out action upon or negotiate upon prior to purchasing the property. Where a problem is identified, we will do our best to offer a solution. However, with most building issues, there are usually many ways to resolve them dependent upon cost, time available and the length of time you wish the repair/replacement to last.

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SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a non-traditional two storey semi-detached property (left side) with a good sized front garden and off-road parking. There is an outbuilding to the left side that has been extended, amended and altered. To the rear there is a triangular garden laid mainly to lawn with a paved area near the property.

Non-traditional building

There are many different types of non traditional buildings. These are generally split into categories of:

1. Metal frame – a metal frame supporting the structure.
2. Pre-cast concrete - cast in a factory and then brought to the site.
3. In-situ concrete - cast at the site.
4. Timber frame – a timber frame supporting the structure.

Each of these main categories then has many, many different types.

Type of non-traditional building

This is originally what is known as an Airey house and there is one still present next door and others across the road. Originally the property had a structural frame with pre-cast reinforced concrete panels. This property, as we assume you are aware, has been substantially amended.



Example of Airey house
(Not your property)

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Designated Defective

The original Airey house has been designated defective for some time meaning there are inherent defects in this type of construction and as such it is generally not mortgageable. The Building Research Establishment (BRE) advise the defects are:

- 1) Cracking of PRC (Pre-cast reinforced concrete) columns
- 2) Water penetration through PRC panels
- 3) High chloride content in PRC panels

We have included within the Appendices a designated defective housing list together with an explanation of approximately forty houses that have been designated as having inherent defects and therefore are unmortgageable.

Non-traditional houses were typically built just after the War Years. In the case of Airey houses the Building Research Establishment database advises between 1945 – 1955 there were 26,000 houses built by W. Airey & Sons and Costain Ltd.

Alterations and improvements to the property

In this building the walls have been rebuilt with we understand the re-use of the original roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal advisor needs to check and confirm all of the above.

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Address, Lincolnshire.

Putting Life into Perspective!

Some of the things that were happening around the time the property was built:

1939 – 1945 World War II

1950's Average price of a new house was £1,891 and average salary was £10 per week. *[Source: Sunlife.co.uk]*

1952 Princess Elizabeth becomes Queen at the age of twenty five.

1956 The TV remote control is invented by Robert Adler

1960's The average house price was £2,530 whilst the average income was £960 per year *[Source: Sunlife.co.uk]*

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LOCATION PLANS

The photographs below identify the building and is not necessarily where the boundaries are.



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EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front view



Driveway



Left view



Rear view



Rear left outbuilding

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

(All directions given as you face the front of the property)

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Front right entrance hallway and stairs
- 2) Rear right bedroom three
- 3) Middle kitchen/diner
- 4) Middle left entrance hallway between main building and outbuilding
- 5) Rear left lounge
- 6) Store area
- 7) Utility room/WC front left



First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 8) Landing
- 9) Front right bedroom four
- 10) Rear right master bedroom
- 11) Rear left bedroom two
- 12) Front left bathroom



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Outside Areas

To the front is a good sized garden and off-road parking for several cars.

To the rear there is a triangular garden laid mainly to lawn with a paved area near the property. There are sheds and play equipment to the rear of the garden.



Front garden



Rear garden



Sheds and play equipment looking towards end of triangular garden

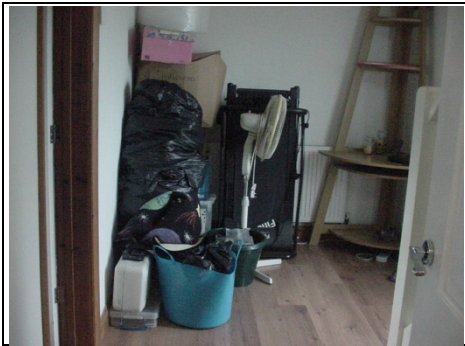
Finally, all these details need to be checked and confirmed by your Legal Advisor.



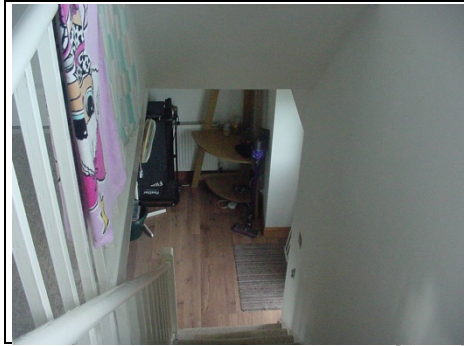
INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

The following photos are of the internal of the property to help you recall what it looked like and the general ambience. We have not necessarily taken photographs of each and every room.

Ground Floor



Front right entrance hallway and stairs



Stairs and hallway



Rear right bedroom three



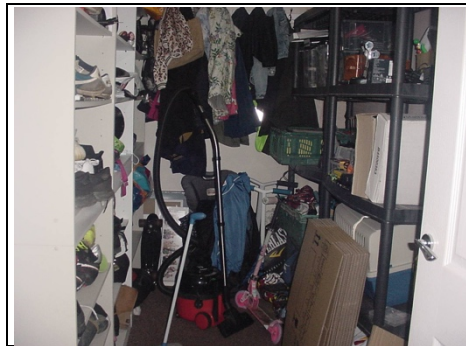
Middle kitchen/diner



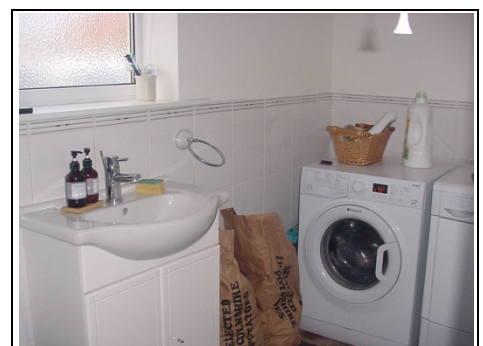
Rear left lounge



Middle left entrance hallway between house and outbuilding



Store



Utility room/WC front left

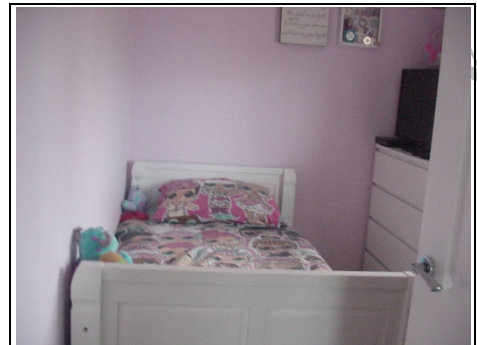
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First Floor



Landing



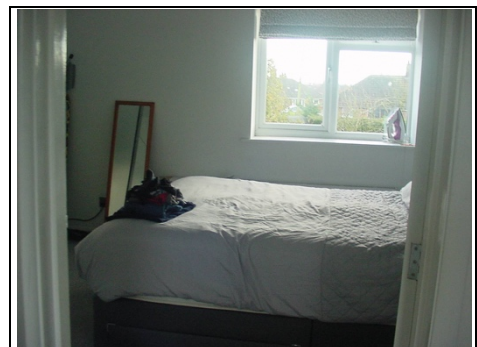
Front right bedroom four



Rear right master bedroom



Front left bathroom



Rear left bedroom two

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SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Originally two chimneys; chimney to right (middle of two semi-detached properties), left chimney removed
Main Roof:	Steep pitched, clad with concrete tiles
Main Roof Structure:	Cut timber roof
Left Single Storey Outbuilding Roof:	Glass reinforced plastic (GRP) flat roof
Rear Left Lean-to:	Plastic on timber frame
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Internal, plastic where viewed at roof level
Walls:	Externally stretcher bond brickwork. We have been provided with photographs that show brickwork externally, fibreglass batts and blockwork internally with dry lining (Note; we have not opened up the structure). Cavity brickwork has weep holes. Outbuilding which forms part of habitable area/lounge - rendered walls, construction not known (all assumed)
Fascias and Soffits:	Plastic
Windows and Doors:	Plastic double glazed windows with trickle vents, no trickle vents to outbuilding

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Internal

Ceilings: Modern plaster (where visible within roof space)

Perimeter Walls: Dry lined (assumed)

Internal Walls: Mixture of solid and studwork (assumed)

Floors: Ground Floor: Solid underfoot, assumed concrete

First Floor: Airey houses typically have timber boarding on a lattice steel joist – not known if this has been replaced

Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and oil (all assumed).

Heating: There is an external oil Worcester boiler located next to the left side of the outbuilding, not visible as encased.

Electrics: Two electric fuse boards 1980's-2000; one in the hallway and one in the corridor between the outbuilding and the main building.

Oil: Plastic oil tank in rear garden

Drainage: Covered over manhole in outbuilding corridor

We have used the term 'assumed' as we have not opened up the structure.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor needs to check and confirm the above and advise us of anything they require further clarification on before legal commitment to purchase the property.





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summaries are not ideal as they try to précis often quite complex subjects into a few paragraphs. This is particularly so in a summary about someone's future home when we are trying to second-guess what their priorities are, so it is important the Report is read in full.

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of 220 photographs during the course of this survey and many pages of notes, so if an issue has not been discussed that you are interested in or concerned about, please phone and talk to us before you purchase the property (or indeed commit to purchasing the property), as we will more than likely have noted it and be able to comment upon it; if we have not we will happily go back.

We have divided the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues.

Once you have read the report we would recommend that you revisit the property to review your thoughts on the building in light of the comments we have made in this survey.

The Good

Survey reports often are full of only the faults and general 'doom and gloom', so we thought we would start with some positive comments on the property!

- 1.0) The property has had the original walls removed and replaced with traditional construction, from what we understand by the contractors X Construction in Year.

This means that the original Airey house which was unmortgageable has been converted into a more traditional construction.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal Advisor to specifically ask for full details and specifications together with any guarantees to check if they are transferable. Also, make enquiries as to how mortgageable the property is now. You need to appreciate the mortgage market is

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forever changing so something that is now mortgageable may not be in the future.

2.0) Good off-road parking.

3.0) Good sized gardens to the front and rear as long as you are happy to do gardening.

We are sure you can think of other things to add to this list.

The Bad

Problems / issues raised in the 'bad' section are usually solvable, but often need negotiation upon. However, a large number of them may sometimes put us off the property.

1.0) Chimney

The chimney is weathered and in need of repair. We can see moss and damage to the very top of it where dampness will start to get in.

ACTION REQUIRED: Repair and repoint and make watertight.

ANTICIPATED COST: £200 - £500 if this can be carried out without scaffolding. If scaffolding is required we would expect higher costs of double to treble this amount; please obtain quotations.



Chimney needs repair

Please see the Chimneystacks Section of this Report.

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2.0) Outbuilding conversion

The outbuilding has been converted into an area which is now being used as what we would term as a habitable area. It has a rendered finish and an unknown construction. Just because an area is being used as a habitable area, does not necessarily mean that it has approval. Conversion of an outbuilding to a habitable area would normally mean things like adding insulation to the walls and possibly the floor.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend your legal advisor asks for full details with regard to the conversion of the outbuilding. We have noted a few areas of concern:

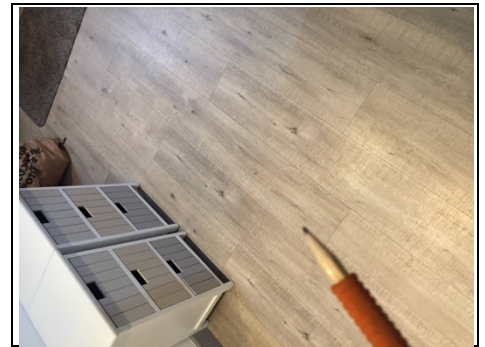
- 1) Roof (see below)
- 2) Cracking to the render
- 3) Water sitting to the base of the property
- 4) Concealed manhole in the corridor



Cracking



Water sitting to base of outbuilding



Manhole covered over

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Roof

The outbuilding has a flat roof which has a Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) roof covering.

Generally, we would firstly advise we are finding a lot more problems with this type of roof which in our experience has been due to the poor workmanship and the roof being laid in the wrong conditions.

In this instance we can see the roof has blistered and also has water sitting on it. We spoke specifically to the owners about this and as with most owners of GRP roofs they say they have a guarantee. Our concern is that these roofs are problematic and we do not feel that they have been sufficiently tested in the British climate.



Repair on GRP roof and lead flashing where flat roof meets main building



Patch repairs to GRP roof



Close up of patch repair

Dampness and re-plastering

There is dampness visible internally and re-plastering.





New plaster in storage room



Damage



Patches to ceiling

The owners advised that they would have the builders return to put the roof right however the problem is that if it has not been laid properly this roof could be a long term problem. Below are examples of a property where a GRP roof was in such a poor state from blistering that it was stripped back to resolve the problem.



Example of a GRP roof being stripped
(Not your property)



Example of dampness coming through when we stripped back the ceilings
(Not your property)



Example of GRP roof with major problems
(Not your property)

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend you obtain a discount for the value of a new roof which we would expect to cost in the region of £10,000 - £15,000. You need to obtain quotations before you commit to purchase the property as part of the negotiation as it is difficult to remove this type of roof or get guarantees for it that are worth the paper they are written on.

Please see the Roof Coverings Section of this Report.



3.0) Airey house rebuilt

This Airey house, from what we understand and the photographs we have been shown, has had the walls rebuilt however we need clarification on this and various other specific elements as well.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal advisor to specifically ask the contractor who carried out the work:

- 3.1) Construction of first floor – these originally would have been a timber boarding on a lattice steel joist. Contractor to confirm whether this was removed or whether it is still in place. If the floor remains as is with a lattice steel joist it may affect the mortgageability of this property. You need to check and confirm this via your solicitors.
- 3.2) Is there a company guarantee or is there an insurance backed guarantee that you get the benefit of?
- 3.3) Contractor (we understand this was X Construction) to provide any further information with regard to:
 - 1) Specification of works
 - 2) Photographic record
 - 3) Chartered engineer or chartered surveyor sign-off of the work as well as building regulations and planning approval if required/obtained.
 - 4) Also, we need to understand how the party wall was treated which is the dividing wall between this property and next door.

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4.0) Asbestos?

When this property was built asbestos was a common popular material which was used almost as commonly as wood. There is a small piece of guttering to the rear right side that looks like it may be asbestos.

The generic sketches show typical areas where asbestos can be found in these properties



Asbestos gutter



Asbestos - outside



Asbestos - inside

Our insurance company requires us to advise we are not asbestos surveyors and advises us to recommend asbestos surveyors are instructed and that you have your own asbestos survey carried out.

ACTION REQUIRED: Although this is on the neighbouring property it is very close to your property. Your solicitor to speak and obtain written confirmation from the local authority/present owners if they have asbestos reports on their properties.

We would always recommend any asbestos is removed from a property as it can not only be dangerous, it can affect the value of the property.

ANTICIPATED COST: Asbestos costs can vary considerably; we are forever surprised at the variety in quotes. Please obtain quotations.

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5.0) Party wall/dividing wall between this property and neighbour

This is a semi-detached property and as such it has a shared wall. We can see a crack in this wall which we would like to record. There can often be differential movement where buildings are constructed in different ways as this property now is.



Crack visible in roof space

ACTION REQUIRED: As this is a one-off inspection we believe that caution is the best way forward. Ideally we would recommend the existing owners take out an insurance claim, advising that the cracking has been noted by a structural surveyor (this should cost them nothing other than time to write the letter/email). This usually means that the insurance company will carry out a monitoring exercise (the Building Research Establishment recommend monitoring any cracks for a minimum of one year) to establish if there is any progressive movement. Your future liability should be limited to the cost of the excess on the insurance providing the insurance company is happy for you to take over the insurance claim.

Your solicitor needs to ensure this is a legally watertight process and ensure your liability is limited to paying the excess on the insurance only.

Outbuilding crack

We have already mentioned the crack to the outbuilding. We would recommend the insurance claim covers this crack as well.



Cracking

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6.0) Condensation

We noted some minor black mould in the bathroom and bedrooms. There is no extract fan in the bathroom and there is an extract in the kitchen however we would recommend this is upgraded to a humidity controlled extract fan.



Signs of black mould



Black mould in bathroom

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend large humidity controlled extract fans are added to the kitchen, the bathroom, downstairs cloakroom (which had washing machines in it at the time of our inspection) and any areas that are used for drying clothes internally during winter months (we would assume that clothes will be dried externally during the warmer months). By large extract fans we mean 150mm.

ANTICIPATED COST: We would anticipate costs between £250 - £500 per extract fan depending upon the wiring required. We always recommend quotes are obtained before work is agreed/commenced.

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7.0) Rear right boundary fence

You need to establish whose fence is the rear right boundary fence as it is in need of work.



Fence on right side propped up



Right fence needs work

ACTION REQUIRED: Repair, strengthen and straighten and re-stain. We would recommend concrete posts.

ANTICIPATED COST: £1,000 - £2,000, possibly more if the whole fence needs doing; please obtain quotations.

Please see the External Areas Section of this Report.

Services

8.0) Dated electrics

The electrics are 1980s-2000 and better are now available.



Fuse Board in hallway



Dated electrics in the corridor between the outbuildings and the main building

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ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend a new fuse board with a metal casing; modern standards require half hour to one hour fire resistant casing around a fuse board.

An Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) test and report and any recommendations to be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

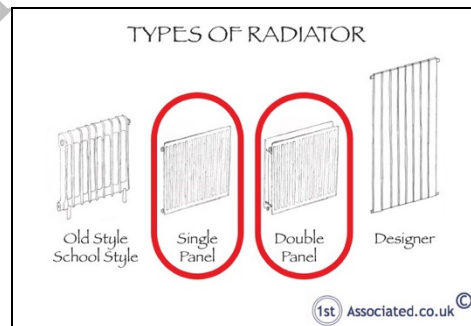
ANTICIPATED COST: £250 - £500 for test and report and £250 - £500 for a new fuse board plus any work recommended; please obtain quotations.

9.0) Radiators

The property has a mixture of double panel radiators and some single panel radiators for example in the rear right bedroom. These may not warm the property to the heat that you desire/modern standards. We much prefer to see double panel convection radiators.



Single panel radiator



Replace single panel radiators with double panel convection radiators

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you upgrade to double panel convection radiators.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £100 - £200 per modern double panel convection radiator; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Services Section of this Report.



The Ugly

We normally put here things that we feel will be difficult to resolve and will need serious consideration.

You need to fully understand what you are purchasing

Although this is a converted non-traditional building you need further clarification as to exactly what was done as some areas cannot be seen. You should be able to get some form of specification of works and confirmation the works were carried out by the contractor and any supervising chartered professional.

Also, as it is next to a non-traditional Airey house you need to ensure that you obtain details with regard to how the party wall/dividing wall is constructed.

The outbuilding is being used as a habitable area. You need confirmation that planning permission has been obtained for this as well as building regulations to bring it up to modern standards. We generally find that things like insulation in the floors are not carried out and insulation to the ceiling. Please note our concerns with regard to the roof.

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Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Maintenance

There is the basic maintenance that you would associate with any building such as clearing gutters, checking that the gutters are not leaking and are falling towards the downpipes and redecoration etc. A budget for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in a good condition. This will prevent undue and unnecessary deterioration.

Services and your own specific testing

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection only of the services within the property we would always recommend you have your own specific testing for each of the services.

Electrics

The property has two electric fuse boards dated 1980s-2000; one in the hallway and one in the corridor between the outbuilding and the main building.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a new fuse board. The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) recommend a test and report whenever a property changes occupancy. This should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

Heating

There is an external Worcester oil boiler next to the left side of the outbuilding, this was not visible as encased. We were pleased to see a plastic oil tank.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

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Drainage

We have not found any manholes. Whilst we ran the tap for 15 minutes without any build up or blockages this is not the same as inspecting the drains.

ACTION REQUIRED: The only true way to be one hundred percent certain of the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report.

Water Supply

There is danger in older properties of having a lead water supply; we would recommend that you speak to the water company to ask them if they have carried out such replacement.

ACTION REQUIRED – SERVICES: We would reiterate that we recommend with regard to all services that you have an independent check by a specialist contractor.

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as redecorating in your own style to turn the property into your home. We have detailed these and other issues within the main body of the report.

Purchase Price

We have not been asked to comment upon the purchase price in this instance, we have however referred you to sources of general information on the housing market within the Information on the Property Market Section, which can be found in the Appendices at the end of the Report.

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Every Business Transaction has a Risk

Every business transaction has a risk, only you can assess whether that risk is acceptable to you and your circumstances. You should now read the main body of the Report paying particular attention to any “**ACTION REQUIRED**” points.

Estimates of Building Costs

Where we have offered an estimate of building costs please remember we are not experts in this area. We always recommend you obtain quotations for the large jobs before purchasing the property (preferably three quotes). The cost of building work has many variables such as the cost of labour and estimates can of course vary from area to area when giving a general indication of costs. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £125 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

If you obtain builders estimates that vary widely, we would advise the work is probably difficult or open to various interpretations and we would recommend a specification is prepared. It would usually be best to have work supervised if it is complex, both of which we can do if so required.

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SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



The Summary Upon Reflection is a second summary so to speak, which is carried out when we are writing the second or third draft a few days after the initial survey when we have had time to reflect upon our thoughts on the property. We would add the following in this instance:

We were pleased that they have had the work carried out however we need to see better documentation with regard to the main house and the outbuilding. We have concerns with regard to the GRP roof that looks already to be deteriorating. We feel the best way forward is to have a discount on the property based upon a new roof.

We have also identified other areas that we feel discount should be negotiated upon.

We would refer you to our comments in the Executive Summary, 'Good', 'Bad' and 'Ugly' Section and ask that you re-read these.

As mentioned previously, there is an interesting property market which we feel is being affected by the Stamp Duty holiday and Covid-19, and you need to make an assessment as to how it is affecting you.

As a general comment for any work required we would always recommend that you obtain at least three quotations for any work from a qualified, time served tradesperson or a competent registered building contractor prior to legal completion.

We would ask that you read the Report in full and contact us on any issues that you require further clarification on.

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AERIAL VIEW – 360 PHOTOS

Where permission has been obtained from the owners we have carried out aerial photographs using an aerial drone, stationary drone or a mono-pod pole (where the environment and weather is suitable). In this case we were unable to fly our drone in the area due to military operations nearby.



Drone and mono-pod pole



Close up of roof
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Chimney
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Flat roof
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Gutter
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Downpipe
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~

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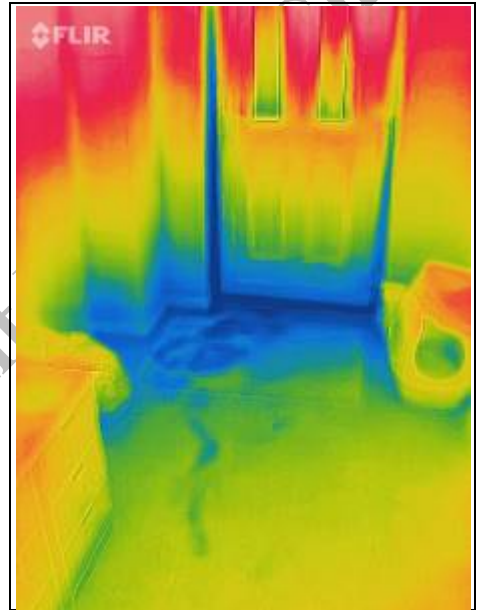
THERMAL IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHS

The property was not pre-heated so there was not ideal conditions however we have taken some thermal images as below. We use thermal imaging photography to help us with the survey. Not only does it establish warm and cold areas, it also helps us identify materials within the property.

(Key to the colours; blue = cold, red = warm, green/yellow = cool)



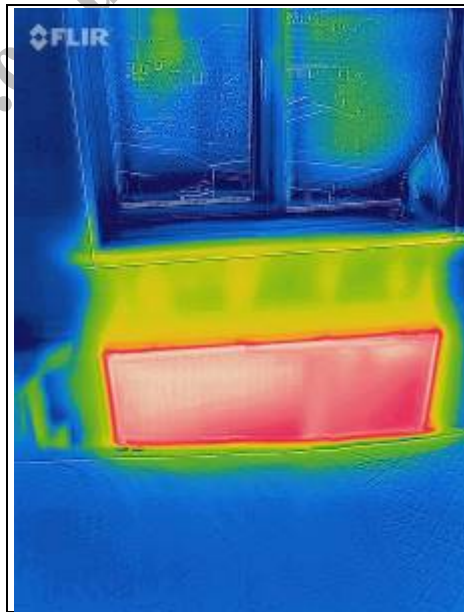
This property and neighbours –
Airey house compared with
traditional brick



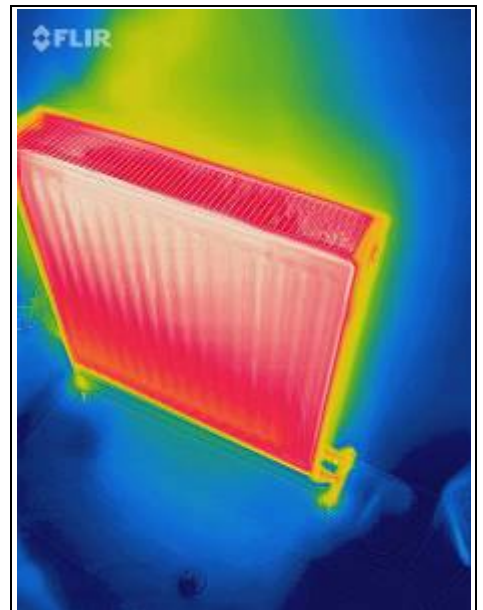
Coldness in link corridor concrete
floor originally from 1960's



Rear of outbuilding



Radiator and window



Radiator

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MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

Just a few more comments about the Report format before you read the actual main body of the Report.

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

We have assumed that the property is to be sold Freehold or Long leasehold, with no unusual or onerous clauses and that vacant possession will be available on completion. Your Legal Advisor should confirm that this is the case.

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

It is important to remember that the estate agents are acting for the seller (usually known as the vendor) and not the purchaser and are therefore eager to sell the property (no sale – no fee!). We are employed as Independent Chartered Surveyors and offer an independent point of view.

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

To carry out your legal work you can use a solicitor or a legal advisor. We have used both terms within the report.

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

This report is being carried out under our terms of engagement for Building Surveys, as agreed to and signed by yourselves. If you have not seen or are not happy with the terms of engagement please phone immediately 0800 298 5424 or email the secretary from which this survey came from.

OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

Our aim is for you to be completely happy with the service we provide, and we will try and help you in whatever way possible with your property purchase - just phone us.

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**THE DETAILED PART OF THE REPORT
FOLLOWS, WORKING FROM THE TOP
OF THE PROPERTY DOWNWARDS**



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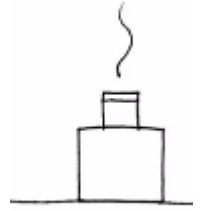
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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS



Chimney Stacks

Chimneys developed originally from open fires placed within buildings. From this, the chimney has developed to its present day format where it is used as an aesthetic feature and focal point rather than purely just to heat the room.

There is one chimney to this property located to the right which sits on the Party Wall and a removed chimney to the left (all directions given as you face the property).

Chimney One – Right (middle of semi-detached properties)

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and two chimney pots. From what we could see from ground level it looked in below average condition considering its age, type and style.



Chimney needs repair



Rear view



Chimney to right/middle viewed within roof space

Unfortunately, we were unable to see the top of the chimney properly known as the flaunching, we therefore cannot comment upon them.

ACTION REQUIRED: Repair and repoint. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Flaunching

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Chimney Two – Left chimney removed

We can see there has been a chimney to the left removed from the pattern we can see in the roof timbers.



Chimney removed to left

Flashings Defined

Flashings prevent dampness from entering the property, usually at junctions where materials change. Such a junction is the one between the chimney and the roof.

Flaunchings Defined

A low, wide cement mortar fillet surrounding the flue terminal on top of the chimneystack to throw off rainwater.

Party Walls

The party wall relates to shared items, such as the chimney and the firewall. If you do any work on these you will need to deal with the Party Wall Act. Here is a brief explanation of it.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Etc. Act 1996

A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

Any work to party structures, such as party walls or party chimney stacks, require agreement under the Party Wall Act. We would be more than happy to offer you help and advice in this matter.

Specifically, in this case we would comment that if you carry out work to the chimney it may be that your neighbour also needs to have work carried out and it would be a shared cost.

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Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks from the parts we could see above roof level. The inspection was made from ground level within the boundaries of the property (unless otherwise stated) using a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera and/or aerial photographs. A closer inspection may reveal latent defects.

Please also see Chimney Breasts, Flues and Fireplaces Section of this Report.

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ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS

The Roof Coverings and Underlayers section considers the condition of the outer covering of the roof. Such coverings usually endure the extremes of climate and temperatures. They are susceptible to deterioration, which ultimately leads to water penetration. The property may or not have an underlayer dependent upon the age of your property, please read on:

We will consider the roofs in three areas:

- 1) Main roof
- 2) Left outbuilding single storey roof
- 3) Rear lean-to roof

Main Roof

The main roof is steep pitched and clad with concrete tiles. From ground level, this looks in average condition considering the roof's age, type and style.



Tile missing at base of chimney

Moss

There is some slight moss on the roof although not as much moss as next door. Part of the problem here is that next doors moss will also get in your gutter. The moss can hold water against the tiles and cause them to have accelerated deterioration.



Moss

ACTION REQUIRED: Replace missing tile. We recommend removing moss with a soft brush, usually during the drier months is better when the moss is dry. Also it would be worth trying to talk your neighbour into doing the same or speak to the local authority. We would recommend this is carried out before you commit to purchase. We do not recommend high pressure cleaning or chemicals are used on the roof tiles as they can damage the tiles.

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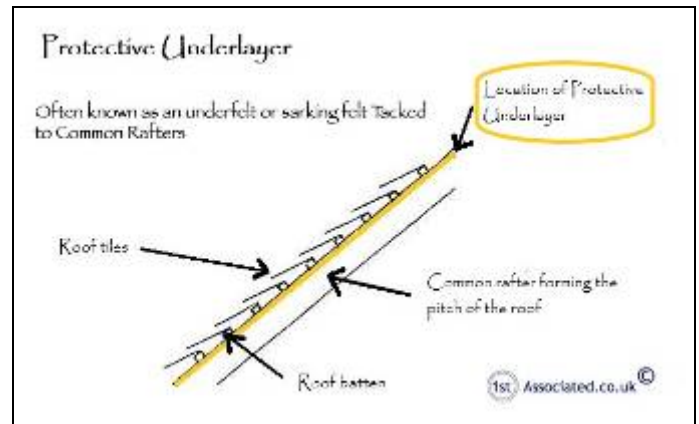
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Protective Underlayer (Often known as the sarking felt or underfelt)

From the 1940s onwards felts were used underneath tiles/slates to stop wind damage and water penetration, these in more recent years have been replaced with plastic equivalents. These are commonly known as underfelts but now the name is not really appropriate, as felt is not the only material used.



Protective underlayer

When we inspected the loft space we found a Hessian base Bitumen membrane. This type of membrane has been used since the 1960s. We generally found it to be in average condition, with damage in some areas which is what we typically find.



This photo shows the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof) and the dark area between is the underlayer.

Flat Roofs

Whilst these roofs are called "flat", present building regulations and good building practice presently requires a minimum fall of 12 degrees.

Flat roofs are formed in a variety of materials. Difficulties can arise when the water is not discharged from the roof but sits upon it, as this can soon lead to deterioration which flat roofs are renowned for.

Left outbuilding single storey roof

The Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) roof is blistering and in a relatively poor condition considering it is so new. We can see dampness is getting into the structure of the building.

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Left flat roof



Close up of patch repair



Flat roof meets main building

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. Take care if you decide to go on the GRP roof as they can become quite slippery.

Further information on flat roofs

As this is a relatively new flat roof it should also have been vented and insulated however we cannot see any evidence of this (although it is difficult to see the insulation).

Ventilation

Building Regulations require flat roofs to be ventilated. Building Regulations are not retrospective but the reason for the requirement is to make sure that any moisture that enters the roof construction is dispelled by way of ventilation. We would suggest that if the opportunity arises ventilation should be provided.

Insulation

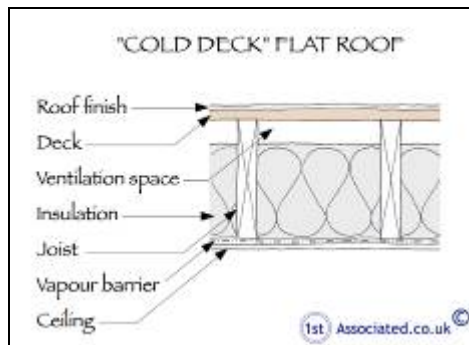
Also it could not be established if there is insulation within the roof or a vapour barrier, without the vapour barrier and combined with inadequate ventilation there will be an increase in the risk of wet or dry rot.

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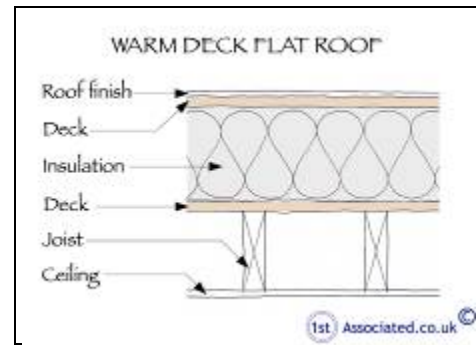
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Cold roof



Warm roof

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend adding vents and insulation if not present.

Rear Lean-to Roof

This is a basic timber frame area covered with a polycarbonate roof which looked in average condition.



Polycarbonate roof



Timber frame

All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera and/or aerial photographs. Flat roofs have been inspected from ground floor level and a ladder.

Finally, we have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see, however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

For further comments with regard to ventilation please see the Roof Structure and Loft Section.

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ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT

(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

The roof structure or framework must be built in a manner which is able to give adequate strength to carry its own weight together with that of the roof covering discussed in the previous section and any superimposed loads such as snow, wind, foot traffic etc.

Main Roof

Roof Access

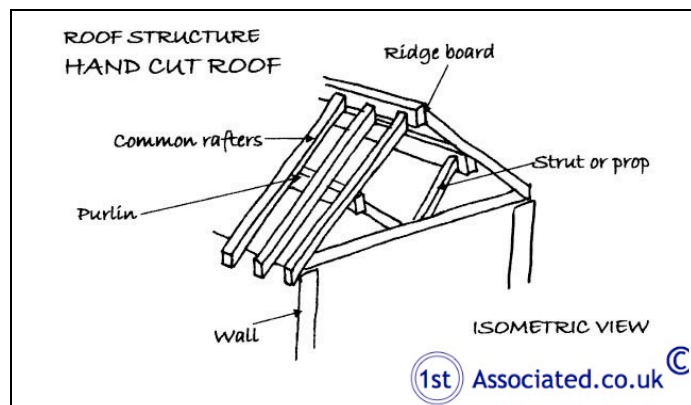
The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing. There is no loft ladder, electric light or secured floorboards. We recommend that these be added, as it will make the loft space safer and easier to use.

The insulation is over the joists so you need to take extra care when in the roof.

The whole of the loft has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing slightly.

Roof Structure

This type of roof structure has what is known as a cut timber roof. This is a roof that is purpose made and hand built on site. Without the original design details we cannot categorically confirm that there are no defects; however it is in line with what we typically see.



Cut timber roof

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Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:

1. Serious active woodworm
2. Structurally significant defects to the timbers
3. Structurally significant dry rot
4. Structurally significant wet rot

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof and the insulation. What we could see was generally found to be in average condition for its age, type and style. It is, however, feasible that there are problems in the roof that are hidden.



General view of inside of roof



Purlins and common rafters

ACTION REQUIRED: The only way to be one hundred percent certain is to have the roof cleared and checked.

Purlins Defined

Purlins are the horizontal cross members that give support to the common rafters.

Common rafters defined

Timbers which form the pitch of the roof.

Fire Walls

The property has one firewall finished with render located to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the property). The firewalls are also Party Walls. There is cracking to the fire wall; please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Crack visible in roof space

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Fire Walls Defined

Fire walls help prevent the spread of fire through roofs and are a relatively recent Building Regulation requirement.

Ventilation

No ventilation noted.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

Electrical Cables

We can often identify the age of an electrical installation by the age of wiring found in the roof. In this case we could not see it due to the mass of insulation.

Please see our further comments in the Services Section of this Report.

Finally, we would ask you to note that this is a general inspection of the roof, i.e. we have not examined every single piece of timber. We have offered a general overview of the condition and structural integrity of the area.

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GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



The function of the gutters and downpipes is to carry rainwater from the roof to the ground keeping the main structure as dry as possible.

Defective gutters and downpipes are a common cause of dampness that can, in turn, lead to the development of rot in timbers. Regular inspection and adequate maintenance are therefore essential if serious problems are to be avoided.

Gutters and Downpipes

The gutters and downpipes have been replaced with plastic; usually they were originally cast iron.



Front gutter



Downpipe discharges into gully

Possible Asbestos?

There is possibly an asbestos link gutter to the rear between your property and next door.



Asbestos gutter

Moss

This property has some moss and the neighbour has a lot of moss and as this is a shared gutter be aware that the moss could block the gutters.

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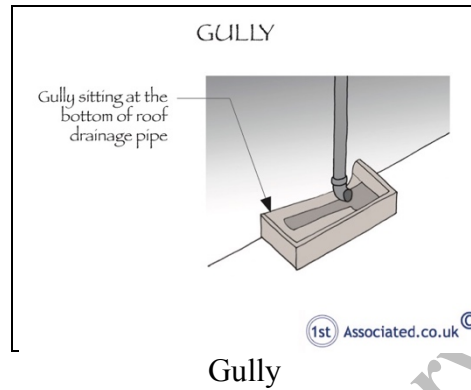
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We were pleased to see the downpipe discharges into a gully which is particularly important where there is a lot of moss and rainwater goods can block.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would always recommend you stand outside the property next time it rains heavily and see how well the drains cope with the rainwater particularly looking at the guttering and the joints.



Gully

We also recommend that the gutters and downpipes are cleaned out, the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.

Soil and Vent Pipe

We assume the property has internal soil and vent pipes. Internal soil and vent pipes can work well, apart from if they leak, as they are hidden from view so a leak is not normally discovered.

Finally, gutters and downpipes have been inspected from ground level. As it was not raining at the time of the inspection it is not possible to confirm one hundred percent that the rainwater installation is free from blockage, leakage etc. or that it is capable of coping with long periods of heavy rainfall. Our comments have therefore been based on our best assumptions.

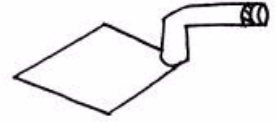
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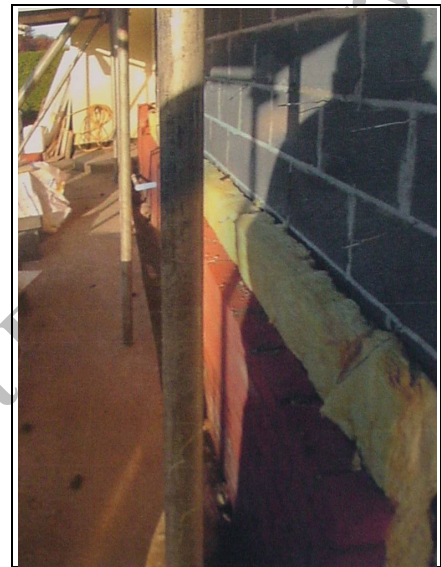
WALLS



External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.

As we understand from our discussions during our question and answer session with the owners, this is a brick and block constructed walls with insulation batts within. We were shown two photographs, ideally we would like to have seen a lot more at different levels of construction.

At the time of our survey we asked for paperwork in relation to this and we were shown X Construction and X Ltd general information and also information from PRC Repair company Limited.



Work proceeding with blockwork then fibreglass batts and then brickwork

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal Advisor needs to speak to the contractor and specifically ask them to confirm in writing they carried out the work and produce a specification of what they did and also confirm if there is a guarantee and if it can be passed onto other people.

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Brickwork

The property is built in a Stretcher bond brickwork in a cement based mortar.



Area where brickwork meets Airey pre-cast concrete panels



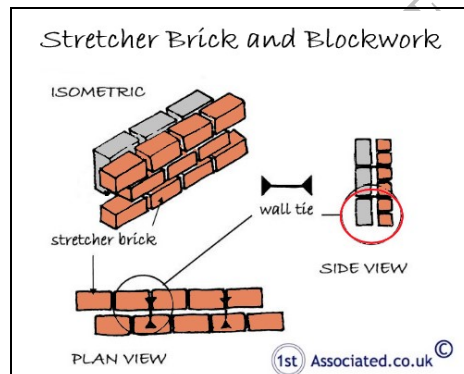
Stretcher bond brickwork with engineering bricks to lower two courses



Engineering bricks to base



Blockwork to gable



Stretcher Bond brickwork



Join at front roof level with next door property

The term "Stretcher Bond" means that from the outside of the property, you can see a row of the sides of the bricks (known as "stretchers") followed by a course above of the same stretch of bricks set off so the joint is centrally above the "stretcher". This pattern would repeat throughout.

Cavity Walls

Cavity walls were first used in Victorian times. It originates from solid walls not always being waterproof against driving rain and not providing a good degree of thermal insulation. The design of cavity walls makes them relatively unstable and they depend upon the wall ties.

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Wall Ties

Walls of cavity construction should incorporate ties to hold together the inner and outer leaves of masonry. We usually look for horizontal cracking where there is older style stretcher bond brickwork, such as this, to see if the wall ties are rusting and forcing open the brickwork.

In this instance we could not see significant horizontal cracks however wall tie failure is a progressive problem. We would add as there is no access to the cavity it has not been inspected and we cannot comment on the presence or condition of wall ties. As such we cannot be hundred percent certain with regard to this problem unless we open up the structure.

Weep holes

The property has weep holes above the windows.



Weep holes above windows



Weep hole above door

Render

The outbuilding is finished in a smooth painted render. We do not know the construction beneath. This is an important part of the property as it is being used as a habitable area and indeed is being marketed as this.



Render

The fascia board is not ideal as it is set into the render rather than on the render.





Left side



No detailing to roof



Fascia board set into render

Cracking

We would remind you that any hairline cracks that appear need to be sealed as soon as possible to stop dampness and water getting in.

ACTION REQUIRED:
Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Crack in outbuilding

Render Detailing

You can normally tell whether the render is good or not by the drip detail over the window and the bell mouth to the base of the property.

Window Drip Detail

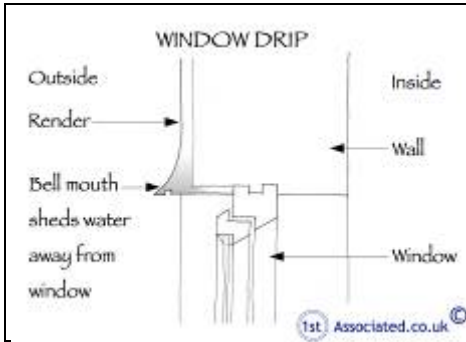
In this case we found no drip detail to the windows. We noted mould and moss around the windows.

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Window drip



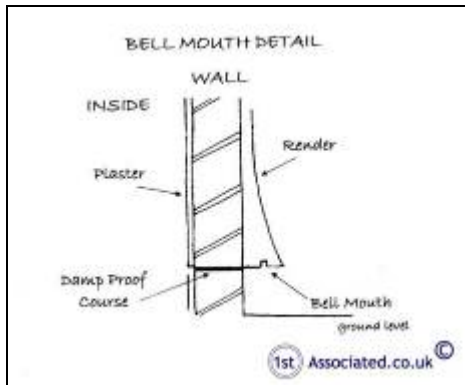
No window drip



Mould and moss around window

Bell mouth to base of property

To the base of the render there was a bell mouth detail. There looks to be water sitting at the base of the property from the staining we can see on the left side.



Bell mouth detail



Water sitting to base of outbuilding

Painted render

Do not underestimate the amount of time/cost it will take to repaint the property.

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Cold Bridging

The unusual thing we have found here is that there looks to be metal lintels. Metal lintels do often cause problems with cold bridging. Please see our article in the Appendices at the back of the report.

Cold Bridging Defined

Cold bridging is caused by a colder element in the structure allowing coldness to pass through the structure much quicker when warm moist air is present in the property, often caused by things like having a shower or a bath, cooking or washing, particularly if you are drying washing on the radiators. This is also caused by the general climate which results in condensation on the element.



Cold bridging / thermal bridging

Finally, the external walls have been inspected visually from ground level and/or randomly via a ladder. Where the window and door lintels are concealed by brickwork / painted render / plaster we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age concrete lintels or metal lintels are common, which can be susceptible to deterioration that is unseen, particularly if in contact with dampness.

Our comments have been based upon how the brickwork / painted render / plaster has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the brickwork / painted render / plaster would be if it were opened up for this age, style and type of construction. We are however aware that all is not always as it seems in the building industry and often short cuts are taken. Without opening up the structure we have no way of establishing this.

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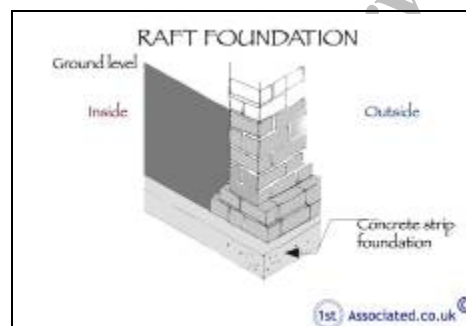


FOUNDATIONS

The foundations function is, if suitably designed and constructed, to transfer the weight of the property through the soil. As a general comment, many properties prior to the 19th Century have little or no foundations, as we think of them today, and typically a two-storey property would have one metre deep foundations.

Foundations

Given the age of the property you may find different depths of foundations. We would expect to find originally a raft foundation. From our discussions with the owner during our question and answer session there was no work to the foundations.



Raft foundation

Building Insurance Policy

You should ensure that the Building Insurance Policy contains adequate provision against any possibility of damage arising through subsidence, landslip, heave etc.

It is your responsibility to check out prior to commitment to purchase that insurance is available on the property on the basis of the things we have reported in the survey. Much as we would like to we are unable to keep up with the changing insurance market and give you advice with regard to this.

Cracks

Please remember to talk about any cracks identified within the property. Often insurers will refer to progressive and non-progressive cracking. Unfortunately, this is something we are unable to comment upon from a one-off inspection; the Building Research Establishment recommend a year of monitoring of any cracking.

We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

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Finally, we have not excavated the foundations but we have drawn conclusions from our inspection and our general knowledge of this type, age and style of property.

We would always recommend that you remain with the existing insurance company of the property.

As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be one hundred percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

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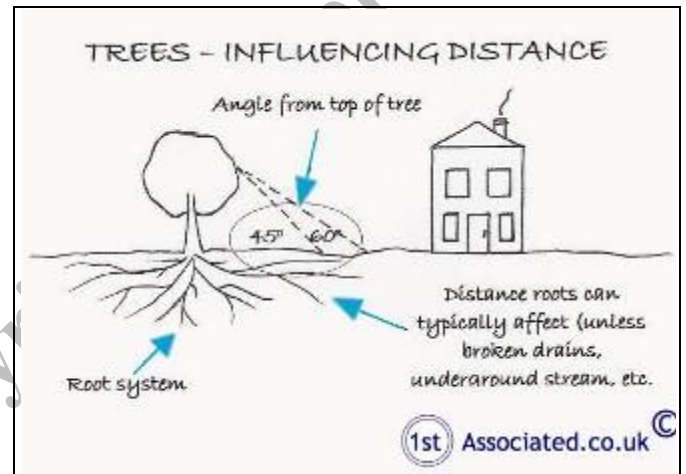
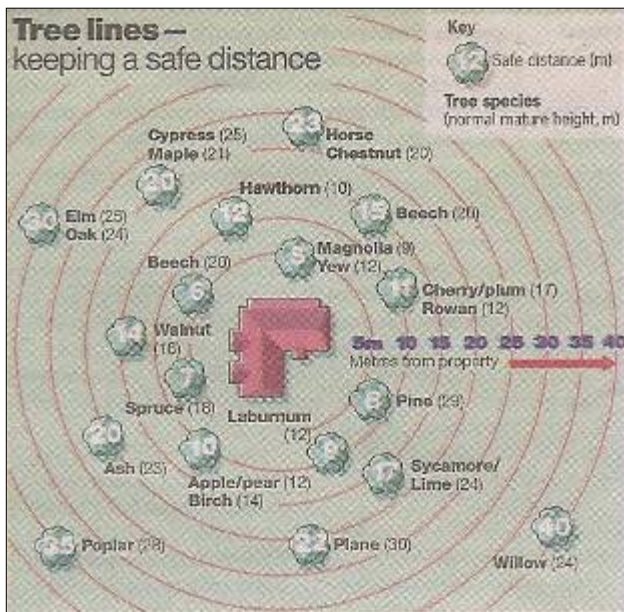


TREES



Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.

There are no trees within what we would term as influencing distance but you do need to speak to your insurance company as they may have a different interpretation for insurance reasons.



Influencing distance of trees to a property

Influencing Distance Defined

This is the distance in which a tree may be able to cause damage to the subject property. It is not quite as simple as our sketch; it depends on the tree, its maturity, the soil type etc., etc.

Finally, insurance requirements with regard to trees have varied over the years and in our opinion have got ever more onerous. We have seen the notifiable distance of a tree away from a property to have been reduced over the years and we reiterate our comments elsewhere within this report that you need to make enquiries with regard to the insurability of your property in relation to trees and other features when you purchase the property.

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

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DAMP PROOF COURSE



The Building Act of 1878 required a damp proof course to be added to all newly built properties within the London area. It also required various other basic standards. These requirements were gradually taken up (or should that be grudgingly taken up) throughout London and then the country as a whole, although this took many years for it to become standard practice.

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case we cannot see a DPC however we assume given that this was done in 2015 that one would have been built in as work proceeded.



No damp proof course visible

Outbuilding

We cannot see a DPC to the outbuilding due to the render.

ACTION REQUIRED: The owner needs to confirm if a damp proof course is present and prove it by a Building Regulations certificate as they advised the outbuilding was completely rebuilt as well. Any photographs that they have we would be more than happy to comment on.

Your attention is drawn to the section of the report specifically dealing with dampness.

Finally, sometimes it is difficult for us to identify if there is a damp proof course in a property. We have made our best assumptions based upon our general knowledge of the age, type and style of this property.

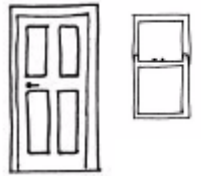
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FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS

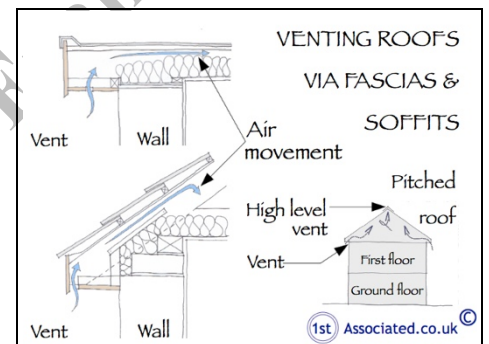


This section covers fascias, soffits and bargeboards and windows and doors, and any detailing such as brick corbelling etc.

Fascias and soffits offer protection to the rafter feet and also allow the securing of the guttering. Windows primary functions are to admit light and air, but they also have thermal and sound properties. The doors allow access and egress within the property.

Fascias and Soffits

The fascias and soffits are plastic without vents, we were surprised vents had not been added as this helps ventilate the roof and certainly was a requirement in 2015 when this work was carried out on the outside of the property although we do appreciate the focus may have been on replacing the walls.



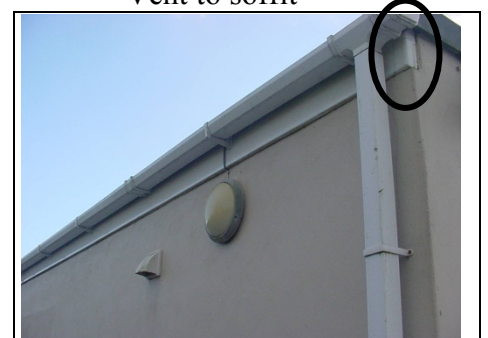
Vent to soffit



Profile metal to next door



Soffit board



Fascia board set into render

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Windows and Doors

The property has plastic double glazed windows with trickle vents which generally look to be of an average quality.



Plastic double glazed window with trickle vent



Trickle vent on kitchen door



Trickle vent

Outbuilding

We noted the outbuilding has a different quality of window without trickle vents. We recommend these are upgraded to windows with trickle vents.

We would draw your attention to the fact that sealed double glazed units can fail, particularly as a result of poor workmanship during installation. Failure of the seal leads to condensation between the two panes of glass and simply replacing the affected units may not provide a satisfactory long-term solution.



Outbuilding window with no trickle vents

Transferable Guarantees

Although these windows are old enquiries should be made as to the existence of any transferable guarantees by your legal advisor. Generally, it is considered that double glazed units have a life of about ten years.

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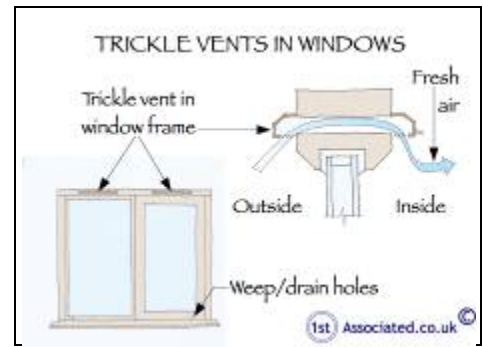
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Trickle Vents Defined

Trickle vents allow a trickle of air through, therefore stopping/reducing the likelihood of condensation occurring within the property.



Trickle vents

Finally, we have carried out a general and random inspection of the external joinery. In the case of the fascias and soffits it is typically a visual inspection from ground level. With the windows and doors we have usually opened a random selection of these during the course of the survey. In this section we are aiming to give a general overview of the condition of the external joinery. Please also see the Internal Joinery section.

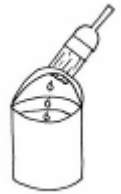
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EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

The external decorations act as a protective coat for the building from the elements. Where this protective covering has failed, such as with flaking paintwork, the elements will infiltrate the structure. This is of particular concern as water is one of the major factors in damage to any structure.

External decoration is required to the rendered part of the property and the cracks in it need to be sealed.

Finally, ideally external redecoration/cleaning is recommended every three to five years dependent upon the original material, its exposure to the elements and the material's properties. Where this is not carried out repairs should be expected. Ideally redecoration and/or cleaning should be carried out during the better weather between mid-April and mid-September.

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

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INTERNAL

CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES



In this section we look at the finish applied to the structural elements such as the plasterwork applied to the ceiling joists, walls or partitions, together with the construction of the internal walls and partitions.

Ceilings

Where we could see the ceilings from the roof space we could see that they were modern plaster.

Plasterboard Cracks

This is quite a common occurrence in older properties that have had different ceilings added, brought about by differential movement in the structure to what the plasterboard can cope with. They tend to be very straight cracks.



Stippled textured paint in some areas

Modern Plaster Defined

Usually a Gypsum plaster which can be applied with a skim coat to the ceilings or the walls over either an older or modern plaster.

Outbuilding

We could see marks to the ceiling indicating that there either have been water leaks or there are water leaks.

Internal Walls and Partitions

These are, we believe a mixture of solid and studwork. It is impossible to determine the construction without opening up the walls and we have therefore taken an educated guess as this is typical in this type of construction.

Wall removed

We noted a wall has been removed in the kitchen and there is a beam. This type of alteration should have had building regulations approval.

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Beam in kitchen



Beam

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal Advisor needs to check and confirm.

Outbuilding

We can see new plaster to the walls. Again, this may relate to water damage from the roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: The owner to specifically advise why they have replastered the walls in the outbuilding.

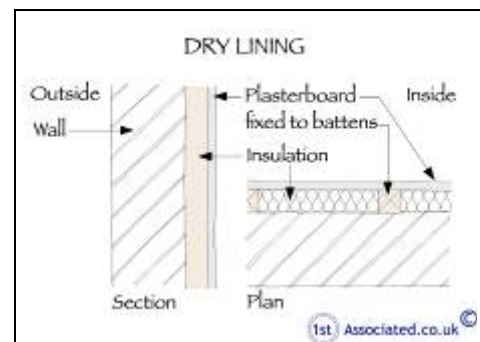


New plaster in store room

Perimeter Walls

These are, we believe a structural frame with dry lining also known as a false wall.

We cannot be one hundred percent certain of the wall construction without opening them up which goes beyond the scope of this report. This comment has been based on the visual look of the wall which is relatively “smooth” and normally means a modern finish.



Dry lining



Address, Lincolnshire.

Finally, ceilings, walls and partitions have been inspected from floor level and no opening up has been undertaken (unless permission has been obtained by yourselves). In some cases the materials employed cannot be ascertained without samples being taken and damage being caused.

We cannot comment upon the condition of the structure hidden behind plaster, dry lining, other applied finishes, heavy furniture, fittings and kitchen units with fitted back panels.

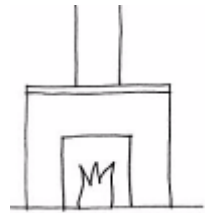
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CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES

With the advent of central heating fireplaces tend to be more a feature than an essential function in most properties.

The chimney breasts are located to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property). We can see what we believe to be the chimney in the ground floor bedroom.



Chimney breast in ground floor bedroom

At the time of the survey no chimneys were in use. Any chimneys that you do not propose to use should be capped and ventilated to prevent dampness. Any chimneys you do intend to use should be swept and a check should be carried out that a lining is in place.

Please see our earlier comments with regards to removed chimney.

Finally, we will comment on the condition of the chimney breast where we can see the chimney breast. If we can see a chimney breast has been removed we will inspect for signs of movement and advise. However, often the chimney breasts are hidden so we cannot comment. Also additional support can be concealed very well when chimney breasts are hidden particularly when plastered over.

Your Legal Advisor needs to specifically check with the Local Authority for removed chimneys and associated chimney breasts and Building Regulations Approvals and advise by e-mail immediately if chimney breasts are found to have been removed. We would recommend opening up the structure to check the condition. If we are not advised we will assume the relevant Building Regulations Approval has been obtained.

It is strongly recommended that flues be cleaned and checked for obstructions prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

Please also see the Chimney Stacks, Flues Section of this report.

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FLOORS



Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.

Ground Floor

The floors felt solid under foot so we have assumed that they are constructed in concrete.



Engineered wood flooring in some areas

First Floor

We believe the first floor is timber boarding on lattice steel joists; see Airey information sheet in Appendices.

Finally, we have not been able to view the actual floors themselves due to them being covered with engineered wood, fitted carpets, floor coverings, laminated flooring etc. The comments we have made are based upon our experience and knowledge of this type of construction. We would emphasise that we have not opened up the floors in any way or lifted any floorboards.

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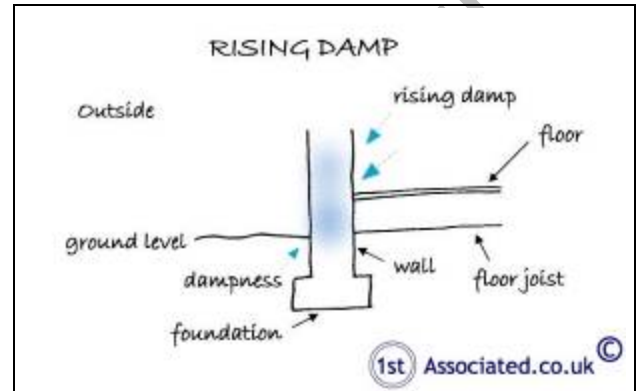


DAMPNESS

In this section we look at any problems that are being caused by dampness. It is therefore essential to diagnose the source of the dampness and to treat the actual cause and not the effect of the dampness.

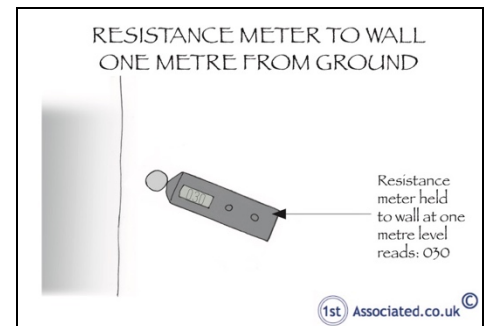
Rising Damp

Rising damp depends upon various components including the porosity of the structure, the supply of water and the rate of evaporation of the material, amongst other things. Rising damp can come from the ground, drawn by capillary action, to varying degrees of intensity and height into the materials above. Much evidence points towards there being true rising damp in only very rare cases.



Rising damp

A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case we were unable to obtain accurate readings due to the dry lining.



Testing for rising damp

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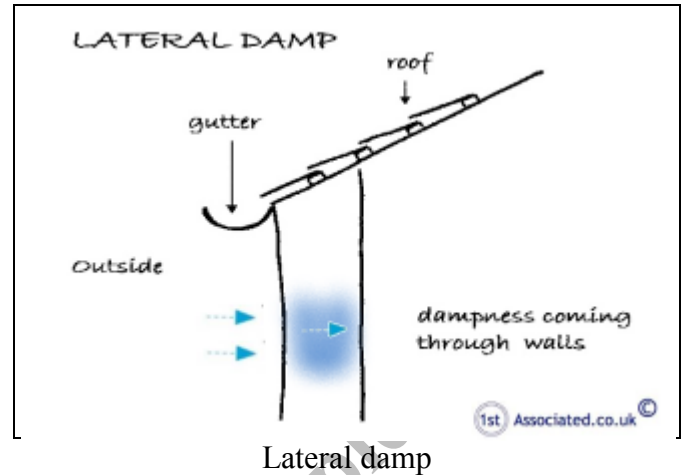
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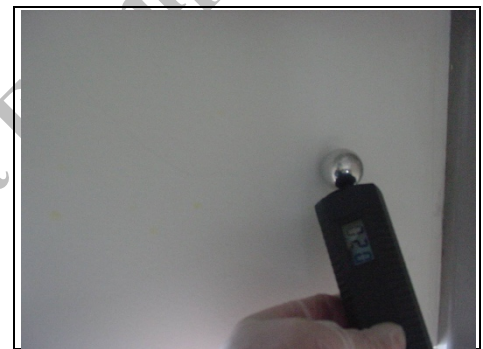


Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

This is where water ingress occurs through the walls. This can be for various reasons such as poor pointing or wall materials or inadequate gutters and downpipes, such as poorly jointed gutters.



We used a resistance meter on the external walls. Our damp meter readings indicated the walls are likely to be dry lined/false walls



Testing for lateral dampness

Condensation

This is where the humidity held within the air meets a cold surface causing condensation.

Condensation depends upon how you utilise the building. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. You need to have a balance between heating, cooling and ventilation of properties and opening windows to air the property regularly.

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Extract fans in kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas

As far as we could see there was no extract in the first floor bathroom. A way of helping to reduce condensation is to have good quality large extract fans with humidity controlled thermostats within the kitchens and bathrooms and also in any areas where you intend to dry clothes which are moisture generating areas.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend large humidity controlled extract fans be added to kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas.

ANTICIPATED COST: We would anticipate costs between £250 - £500 per extract fan depending upon the wiring required; quotations required.

Finally, effective testing was prevented in areas concealed by heavy furniture, fixtures such as kitchen fittings with backboards, wall tiles and wall panelling. We have not carried out tests to BRE Digest 245, but only carried out a visual inspection.

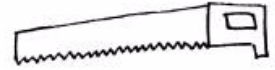
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INTERNAL JOINERY



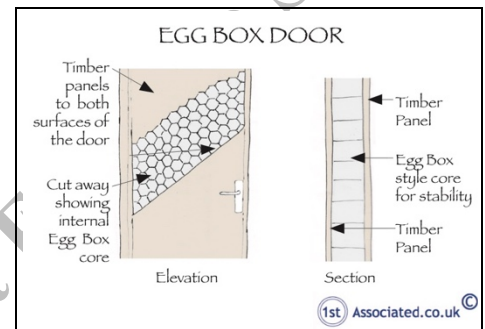
This section looks at the doors, the stairway, the skirting boards and the kitchen to give a general overview of the internal joinery's condition.

Doors

The property has hollow core doors (sometimes referred to as egg box doors, as this is what the internal of them looks like when they are opened up). These can damage very easily.



Hollow core door



Cross section of egg box door/hollow core door

Staircase

We were unable to examine the underside of the stair timbers due to it being lined where we could see it, which precluded our inspection, so we cannot comment further upon the stair structure. We can, however, say that the lining gives a resistance to the spread of fire if such circumstances were to occur.

Kitchen

We found the kitchen in average condition, subject to some wear and tear as one would expect in a family house. We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

Finally, it should be noted that not all joinery has been inspected. We have viewed a random sample and visually inspected these to give a general overview of the condition. Please also see the External Joinery/Detailing section.

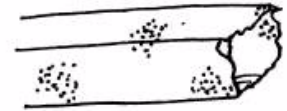
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TIMBER DEFECTS



This section considers dry rot, wet rot and woodworm. Wet and Dry rot are species of fungi, both need moisture to develop and both can be very expensive to correct. We would also add that in our experience they are also often wrongly diagnosed.

Dry Rot/White Rot

*Dry rot is also sometimes known by its Latin name *Serpula lacrymans*. Dry rot requires constant dampness together with a warmish atmosphere and can lead to extensive decay in timber.*

We have not visually seen any significant dry rot during the course of our inspection. We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof.

Wet Rot/Brown Rot

*Wet rot, also known by its Latin name *Contiophora puteana*, is far more common than dry rot. Wet rot darkens and softens the wood and is most commonly seen in window and doorframes, where it can relatively easily be remedied. Where wet rot affects the structural timbers in a property, which are those in the roof and the floor areas, it is more serious.*

We have not visually seen any signs of significant wet rot during the course of our inspection. Our concern is that there may be wet rot within the roof of the outbuilding underneath the GRP roof.

Again, we would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof

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Woodworm



Active woodworm can cause significant damage to timber. There are a variety of woodworm that cause different levels of damage with probably the worst of the most well known being the Death Watch Beetle. Many older properties have woodworm that is no longer active, this can often be considered as part of the overall character of the property.

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm. Within the roof we found no obvious visual signs of woodworm activity or indeed signs of past woodworm activity that has caused what we would term 'structurally significant' damage. In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection is usually restricted by insulation covering some of the timbers and general stored items in the roof, as it is restricted throughout the property by general fixtures and fittings.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to be one hundred percent certain that there is no woodworm the only way would be to check the property when is emptied of fixtures and fittings etc.

Finally, when you move into the property, floor surfaces should be carefully examined for any signs of insect infestation when furniture and floor coverings are removed together with stored goods. Any signs that are found should be treated to prevent it spreading. However, you need to be aware that many damp and woodworm treatment companies have a vested interest in selling their products and therefore have fairly cleverly worded quotations where they do not state if the woodworm they have found is 'active'. You should ask them specifically if the woodworm is active or not.

We would also comment that any work carried out should have an insurance backed guarantee to ensure that if the company does not exist, or for whatever reason, the guarantee is still valid. More importantly it is essential to ensure that any work carried out is carried out correctly.

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INTERNAL DECORATIONS



With paints it should be remembered that up to 1992 lead could be used within paint and prior to this most textured paints (commonly known as Artex) contained an element of asbestos up to 1984, so care should be taken if the paintwork looks old and dated.

Internal decorations are in average condition for a family home. You may wish to decorate to your own personal taste.

Finally, we would draw your attention to the fact that removal of existing decorative finishes may cause damage to the underlying plasterwork necessitating repairs and making good prior to redecoration.

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THERMAL EFFICIENCY

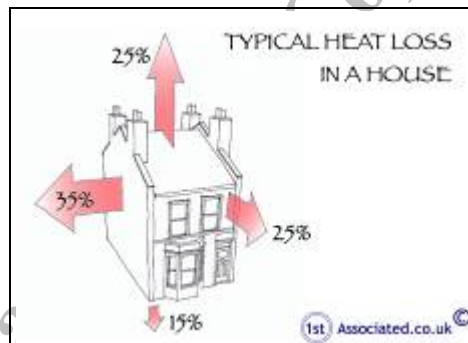


Up until the mid 1940s we did not really consider insulation in properties, for example it was only in the 1960s that we started putting insulation in the roof and then it was about 50mm, in the 1970s this was upgraded to 100mm. Then we started to think about double glazing and cavity wall insulation. Since then insulation standards have increased considerably and today we are looking at typically using insulation not only in the roof but also in the walls, floors and windows and more recently considerable work has been carried out on how efficient boilers are within properties. Care has to be taken that properties are not insulated disproportionately to the ventilation as this can cause condensation and you should be aware that you need to ventilate any property that is insulated.

Zoopla (and others may do similar) show an energy assessment of how much typical energy bills will be on a property. We have not had feedback on how accurate this is as yet however we feel it is an interesting step forward in looking at energy efficiency of a property, although there are all sorts of arguments as to how the energy efficiency calculations are carried out.

Roofs

Some roof insulation was present although not to current Building Regulations requirements of 300mm. In this case there is approximately 200mm.



Typical heat loss



Insulation

Walls

The property has a stretcher bond construction and we can see the insulation batts that have been added.

Windows

The windows are double glazed and therefore will have reasonable thermal properties. These look to be relatively new and have trickle vents with the exception of the outbuilding area.

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Services

Service records should be obtained for the boiler and the electrics. It is essential for the services to be regularly maintained to run efficiently.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend you ask the owners for energy bills and service records for the past few years.

Summary

Assuming the above is correct, this property is average compared with what we typically see.

Further information can be obtained with regard to energy saving via the Internet on the following pages:

HTTP//www.est.org.uk, which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid.

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk (Centre for Alternative Technology)

*or Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air by David J C MacKay
HTTP//www.withouthotair.com/Videos.html to download for free or buy a paper copy as we did.*

It is worth watching the video How Many Light Bulbs? by David J C MacKay – can be viewed on YouTube

HIPs

We understand that HIPs were suspended from 20th May 2010. Energy Performance Certificates are required before a sale completes. Please note we have not seen the Energy Performance Certificate.

Finally, we would comment that energy we feel will become a major consideration in years to come, particularly with the greater focus in modern buildings on energy efficiency.

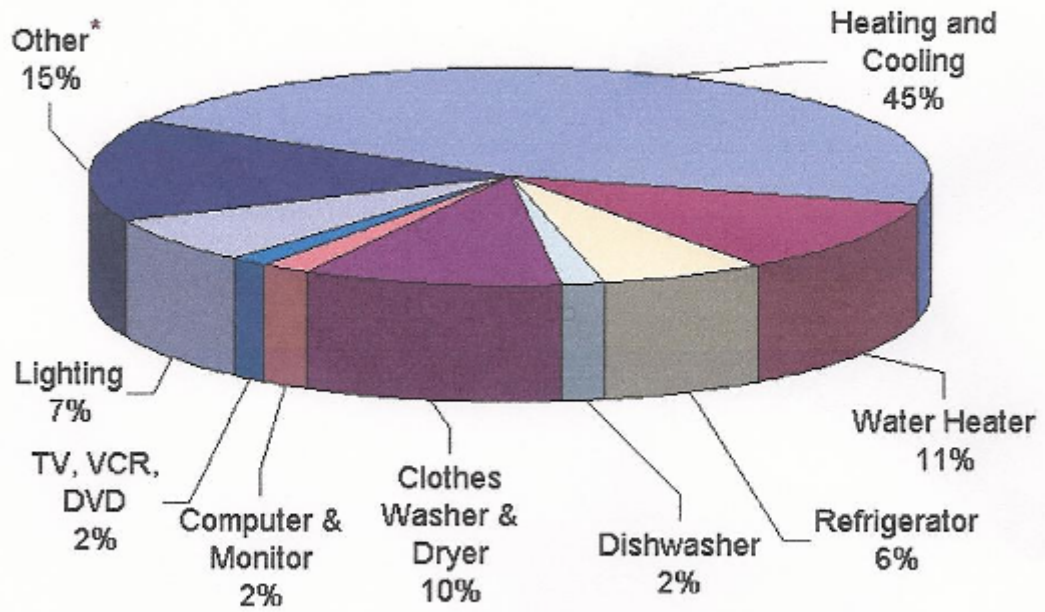
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What does my energy bill pay for?



* "Other" represents an array of household products, including stoves, ovens, microwaves, and small appliances. Individually, these products account for no more than about 2% of a household's energy bills.

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OTHER MATTERS

In this section we put any other matters that do not fit under our usual headings.

Security

No security system was noted. It is a personal decision as to whether you feel one is necessary. We are not experts in this field and therefore cannot comment further. We suggest you contact a member of NSI (National Security Inspectorate), obtainable through directory enquiries, or your local Police Force for advice on a security system.

Fire / Smoke Alarms

No smoke detectors were noted. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply. Obviously in a property of this age that is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors be installed. We would always recommend a hard wired fire alarm system and are also aware that some now work from a wireless signal which may be worth investigating. Whilst fire is relatively rare it is in a worst case scenario obviously devastating.

Insurance

We would always recommend staying with the existing insurance company, and then if there are any problems you should not have the difficulty of negotiating with two insurance companies passing the blame between each other.

We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

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Asbestos

In a property of this type there was asbestos particularly to the roofs. There may also be other asbestos elements such as fascias and soffits, cladding, internal walls and ceilings and ductwork around services. In this case there may be asbestos to the guttering which looks to be on your neighbour's property.

Asbestos was commonly used post war until it was banned only in the UK in the last ten years or so. It is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time where products were imported from countries where it is not banned.

Our insurance company require us to advise we are not asbestos specialists and recommend you have an asbestos survey carried out by a specialist asbestos company.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to confirm you are one hundred percent free of asbestos you need to have an asbestos survey carried out.

Your legal advisor to speak to the council/owners of next door to establish if there is asbestos on the neighbour's property.

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SERVICES

This survey does not include any specialist reports on the electricity supply and circuits, heating or drainage, as they were not requested. The comments that follow are based upon a visual inspection carried out as part of the overall Building Survey.

Services and specialist installations have been visually inspected. It is impossible to examine every detail of these installations without partially dismantling the structure. Tests have not been applied. Conclusive tests can only be undertaken by suitably qualified contractors. The vendor/seller should be requested to provide copies of any service records, test certificates and, ideally, the names and addresses of the installing contractors.

BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY



We are sometimes asked with regard to the Broadband Connectivity in the area. We have identified some websites which we believe are useful for this:

<https://www.broadband.co.uk/>

Advises whether there is phone line broadband or Superfast or Ultrafast broadband in an area.

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/>

Allows you to check broadband availability, check mobile availability and run a speed test.

However, we would always recommend speaking to the neighbours to see what they have used and of course it is always good to get to know your neighbours.

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ELECTRICITY



It is strange to think that electricity only started to be used in domestic properties at the turn of the 19th century with gas lighting still being the norm for a good many years after.

Periodic inspections and testing of electrical installations is important to protect your property from damage and to ensure the safety of the occupants. Guidance published by the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) recommends that inspections and testing are undertaken at least every 10 years (we recommend every five years) and on change of occupancy. All electrical installation works undertaken after 1st January 2005 should be identified by an Electrical Installation Certificate.

Fuse Board

There are two electric fuse boards; one in the hallway and one in the corridor between the outbuilding and the main building. The fuse boards looked 1980's-2000 and better are now available.



Fuse Board in hallway

Earth Test

We carried out an earth test in the kitchen area to the socket point that is normally used for the kettle, this proved satisfactory.



Earth test

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Address, Lincolnshire.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend a new fuse board with a fire resistant metal case and would advise as the property is changing occupancy an Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) test and report and any recommendations should be carried out by a NICEIC registered, or equivalent, approved electrical contractor or similarly approved.

In addition to this your Legal Advisor is required to make full enquires with the owners to establish if any electrical installation work has been carried out and to provide suitable certification for any works carried out after 1st January 2005. Any comments made within this report or verbally do not change this requirement.

For basic general information on this matter please see the appendices at the end of this report.

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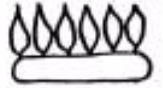
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OIL



All appliances, pipework and flues should be subject to an annual service by a competent OFTEC registered engineer. Unless evidence can be provided to confirm that there has been annual servicing, we would recommend that you commission such a service prior to use to ensure safe and efficient operation.

Oil Tanks

We were pleased to see that the oil tanks are plastic. These usually replace the older metal tanks that can rust and they typically have a double lining, meaning that if they leak they leak into the outer lining.



Plastic oil tank

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PLUMBING AND HEATING



In this section we do our best from a visual inspection to look at how the water is supplied to the property, how the supply is distributed around the property, how it is used to heat the property and how it is discharged from the property.

Water Supply

We were advised by the owner that the controlling stopcock is located in the kitchen. The stopcock and other controlling valves have not been inspected or tested for operational effectiveness.

Water Pressure

When the taps were run to carry out the drainage test we checked the pressure literally by putting a finger over the tap and this seemed average. The Water Board have to guarantee a certain pressure of water to ensure that things like boilers, particularly the instantaneous ones have a constant supply of pressured water (they would blow up if they didn't!).

Cold Water Cistern

We have not found a water tank. We can only assume that the water is directly fed to the taps. The original idea behind a water tank was to help water pressure and to give an emergency supply of water.

Plumbing

The plumbing, where visible, comprises copper piping. No significant leakage was noted on the surface, although most of the pipework is concealed in floors, walls and ducts.

Heating

There is an external Worcester oil boiler located next to the left side of the outbuilding, not visible as encased.

There is a vent from the boiler which needs to be protected so it does not damage the gutters as the heat can sometimes warp the gutters. We would recommend a deflector is added.

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Worcester boiler to side of outbuilding



Worcester boiler located externally

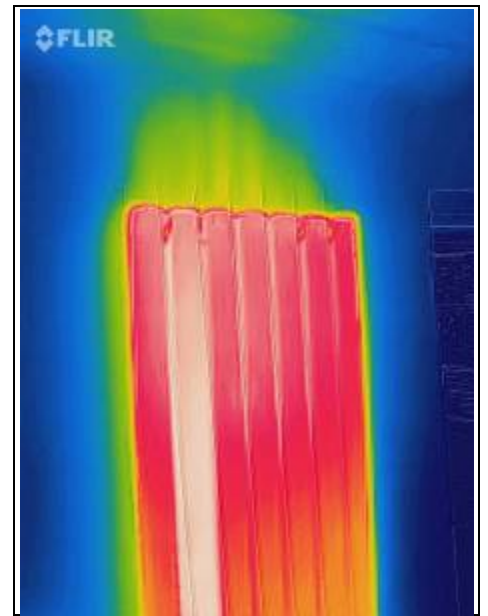


Flue can warp the plastic

Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no evidence to suggest any serious defects but we would nevertheless recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

Ten Minute Heating Test

The heating was on during the course of the survey and it was pleasantly warm.



Vertical radiator

Finally, it should be noted that the supply pipe from the Water Company stopcock to the internal stop tap is the responsibility of the property owner.

We cannot comment on the condition of the water service pipe to the building. It should be appreciated that leaks can occur for some time before signs are apparent on the surface.

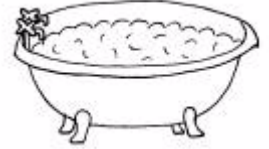
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BATHROOM



In this section we consider the overall condition of the sanitary fittings such as the bathroom, the kitchen, the utility room and the cloakroom.

Bathroom

The property has a three piece bathroom suite, consisting of a bath, wash hand basin and WC, which looks in average condition.

ACTION REQUIRED: A humidity controlled extract fan needs to be added as there was an above average level of black mould in the house. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Finally, although we may have already mentioned it above we would reiterate that it is important to ensure that seals are properly made and maintained at the junctions between wall surfaces and baths and showers etc. We normally recommend that it is one of the first jobs that you carry out as part of your DIY on the property, as water getting behind sanitary fittings can lead to unseen deterioration that can be costly, inconvenient and difficult to repair.

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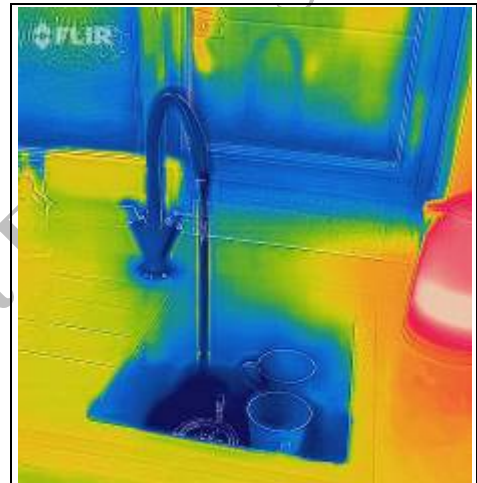


MAIN DRAINS

The sanitary system, as we know it now, came into being some 100 years ago during the Victorian era and works so successfully today it is often taken for granted. It is only in recent years that re-investment has taken place to upgrade the original drainage systems.

It is assumed that the foul drains from the property discharge into a public sewer; this should be confirmed by your Legal Advisor prior to exchange of contracts, who should also provide information in respect of any common or shared drains including liability for the maintenance and upkeep of the same.

The cold taps have been run for approximately quarter of an hour in the kitchen and outbuilding utility room. No build up or back up was noted.



Tap ran in kitchen

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

For your information, inspection chambers / manholes are required to be provided in the current Building Regulations at each change of direction or where drainage runs join the main run.

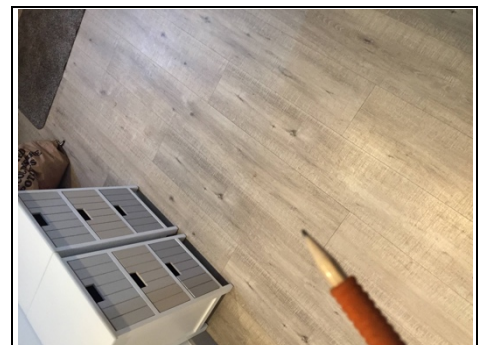
We have identified one inspection chamber / manhole however this was not visible.

Manholes Defined

Access areas which usually fit a man (or woman) into them and are put in where the drains change direction.

Inspection Chamber / Manhole One - Outbuilding

The manhole has been covered over.



Manhole covered over

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ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a closed circuit TV camera report of the drains.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £250 - £500 for CCTV report; please obtain quotations.

Finally, it must be emphasised that the condition of the property's foul drains can only be ascertained by the carrying out of a test; such a test has not been undertaken. Should there be leaks in the vicinity of the building then problems could occur, particularly with respect to the stability of the building's foundations. Drainage repairs are inevitably costly and may result in damage being caused to those areas of the property beneath, or adjacent to, which the drains have been run.

Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

Whilst very innocent looking rainwater downpipes can cause lots of problems. If they discharge directly onto the ground they can affect the foundations and even if they are taken away to soak-aways they can attract nearby tree roots or again affect foundations.

Some rainwater drains are taken into the main drainage system, which is now illegal (as we simply do not have the capacity to cope with it), and can cause blockages to the main drains! Here we have done our best from a visual inspection to advise of any particular problems.

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal.

In this era of property they are likely to be combined/shared drains which are where the foul water and the surface water combines. These can be a problem during heavy rainfall and peak periods, such as the 9 o'clock rush to work.

Finally, rain/surface water drains have not been tested and their condition or effectiveness is not known. Similarly, the adequacy of soak-aways has not been established although you are advised that they tend to silt up and become less effective with time.

Please also see our comments within the Gutters and Downpipes section.

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OUTSIDE AREAS

Sun Map

The Sun Map shows the sun's path as it travels around the property at a specific date; the date can be seen at the very bottom of the picture. The arrows show the sun's position using a 24 hour clock face around the property.



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PARKING



The property has off-road parking to the front.

OUTBUILDINGS

The main focus of this report has been on the main building. We have taken a cursory inspection of the outbuilding and sheds. We have not looked within the sheds.



Sheds

EXTERNAL

Front Garden

The property has a good sized front garden.



Front garden

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Rear Garden

To the rear there is a triangular garden laid mainly to lawn with a paved area near the property.



End of triangular rear garden



Rear paved area



Rear Garden



Unmade ground behind outbuilding area

Boundaries

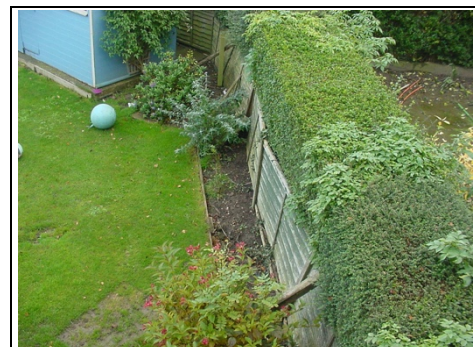
The left hand boundary (all directions given as you face the property) is usually the responsibility of the subject property.

There is normally a 'T' marking which boundary is yours on the deeds which you can obtain from Land Registry.

You need to establish whose fence is the rear right boundary fence as it is in need of work.



Fence on right side



Right fence needs work

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Finally, whilst we note the boundaries, these may not be the legal boundaries. Your Legal Advisor should make further enquiries on this point and advise you of your potential liability with regard to any shared structures, boundary walls and fences.

Neighbours

We would normally chat to nearby neighbours, but in this instance we have not spoken to any.

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POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

If you wish to proceed with your purchase of the property a copy of this report should be forwarded to your Legal Advisor and the following points should be checked by him/her:

- a) Responsibility for boundaries.
- b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.
- c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
 - i) Removal of any chimneys in part or whole.
 - ii) Certificates confirming chimneys have been swept
 - iii) Roof and similar renewals.
 - iv) Roof and Wall insulation.
 - v) Information from the builders who carried out the work including: (1) specifications (2) confirmation of payment and final invoice (3) any certificates from a chartered engineer/chartered surveyor who oversaw the work (4) Building Regulations certificate for both the main house and the outbuilding
 - vi) Amendments/removal of any walls in part or whole.
 - vii) Double glazing or replacement windows.
 - viii) Drainage location, maintenance and repairs.
 - ix) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
 - x) Rising damp treatments.
 - xi) Asbestos
 - xii) Boiler and central heating installation and maintenance.
 - xiii) Electrical test and report.
 - xiv) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - xv) Have there been any structural problems referred to insurance companies, any insurance claims, monitoring or underpinning, etc.
 - xvi) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.

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- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.
- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.
- k) Confirm from enquiries that no underground tunnels, wells, sewers, gases, mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.
- l) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.
- m) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.
- n) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Environmental report or a similar product is used by you to establish whether the area falls within a flood plain, old landfill site, radon area etc. If your Legal Advisor is not aware of Environmental reports or similar please ensure that they contact us and we will advise them of it. Any general findings should be brought to their logical conclusion by using appropriate specialist advisers.

However, with regard to Environmental reports or similar general reports on the environment please see our article link on the www.1stAssociated.co.uk Home Page.
- o) Any other matters brought to your attention within this report.

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

Your Legal Advisor should carry out Local Authority searches to ascertain whether the property is a Listed Building and whether it is situated in a Conservation Area. They should also find out any information available with regard to Planning Applications and Building Control. We have not made any formal or informal Local Authority enquiries.

Finally, your Legal Advisor should carry out any additional enquiries they feel necessary and if they find anything unusual or onerous then we ask that they contact us immediately for our further comments.

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It is our policy not to offer a conclusion to ensure that the Building Survey is read in full and the comments are taken in context.

If you would like any further advice on any of the issues discussed or indeed any that have not been discussed!

Please do not hesitate to contact us on 0800 298 5424 or send an email directly to whoever produced the report.

For and on Behalf of
Independent Chartered Surveyors

This Report is dated: Date

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REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses

Published by Estates Gazette Limited

Life expectancies of building components

*Published by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and
Building Research Establishment*

Surveying buildings

By Malcolm Hollis

Published by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Books.

House Builders Bible

By Mark Brinkley

Published by Burlington Press

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LIMITATIONS

Our limitations are as the agreed Terms and Conditions of Engagement.

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

The report has been prepared in accordance with our Conditions of Engagement dated Date and should be regarded as a comment on the overall condition of the property and the quality of its structure and not as an inventory of every single defect. It relates to those parts of the property that were reasonably and safely accessible at the time of the inspection, but you should be aware that defects can subsequently develop particularly if you do not follow the recommendations.

ENGLISH LAW

We would remind you that this report should not be published or reproduced in any way without the surveyor's expressed permission and is governed by English Law and any dispute arising there from shall be adjudicated upon only by the English Courts.

SOLE USE

This report is for the sole use of the named Client and is confidential to the Client and his professional advisors. Any other persons rely on the Report at their own risk.

APPROVALS/GUARANTEES

Where work has been carried out to the property in the past, the surveyor cannot guarantee that this work has been carried out in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations, British/European Standards and Codes of Practice, Agreement Certificates and statutory regulations.

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ONLY HUMAN!

Although we are pointing out the obvious, our Surveyors obviously can't see through walls, floors, heavy furniture, fixed kitchen units etc. they have therefore made their best assumptions in these areas.

As this is a one off inspection, we cannot guarantee that there are no other defects than those mentioned in the report and also that defects can subsequently develop.

LAYOUT PLAN

We have used the estate agents floor plan as a guide to the layout of the building. We have not checked it for scale and accuracy.

WEATHER

It was a dry autumn day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

As you are probably aware there has been some record breaking weather recently:

2018 being the driest start to a summer.
December 2015 was the wettest month
August 2004 the wettest August on record in many areas.
2003 was the driest year on record
2000 was the wettest year on record

This may have adverse effects on many buildings in years to come or the not too distant future.

NOT LOCAL

It should be noted the surveyors may not be local to this area and are carrying out the work without the benefits of local knowledge on such things as soil conditions, aeroplane flight paths, and common defects in materials used in the area etc.

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OCCUPIED PROPERTY

The property was occupied at the time of our survey, which meant that there were various difficulties when carrying out the survey such as stored items within cupboards, the loft space and obviously day-to-day household goods throughout the property. We have, however, done our best to work around these.

JAPANESE KNOTWEED

We have not inspected for Japanese Knotweed. We would advise that we are finding that some mortgage valuation surveyors are setting valuations at zero on any property with Japanese Knotweed and are reluctant to lend where it is present.

A BBC news report dated April 2018 states that the latest research has been carried out by Swansea University, where they carried out trials near Cardiff and Swansea and tested 19 main methods of controlling the plant and they found that none of these methods eradicated it. See our article:

<https://buildingsurveyquote.co.uk/japanese-knotweed-buildings-and-resveratrol/>

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to carry out your own research on this matter/due diligence before you legally commit to purchase the property and be aware that it could be in neighbouring properties which you do not have direct control over.

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately, in this instance our inspection has been limited as:

- 1) We did not have a full view of the roof due to the insulation covering the ceiling joists and general configuration of the roof.
- 2) We did not open up the walls as we could not see a way of doing this without causing damage.



Stored items in lounge

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- 3) We did not open up the ground floor or the first floor as we could not see a way to do it without causing damage.
- 4) We didn't have the benefit of meeting you at the property to talk about your specific requirements.

BUILDING INSURANCE

We do not advise with regard to building insurance. You need to make your own enquiries. Some areas may have a premium, some buildings may have a premium and some insurers may be unwilling to insure at all in certain areas. You need to make your own enquires prior to committing to purchase the property. Please be aware the fact a building is currently insured does not mean it can be re insured.

We would comment that non-insurability of a building we feel will affect value. It is therefore essential to make your own enquiries with regard to insurance before committing to purchase the property and incurring fees.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to contact an insurance company today to make enquiries with regard to insurance on this property.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Our computer system sends two copies of our Terms and Conditions to the email address given to us when booking the survey; one has the terms attached and the other has links to the Terms and Conditions on our website (for a limited time). If you have not received these please phone your contact immediately.

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APPENDICES

1. Contact Information
2. Designated Defective Housing List
3. The electrical regulations – Part P of the Building Regulations
4. Information on the Property Market
5. Examples of non traditional housing
6. Non Traditional Housing

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CONTACT INFORMATION

This is the information we have been provided with by the owners with regard to the work that was carried out.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal advisor needs to specifically ask in writing for further details of:

- 1) Specification
- 2) Invoice for the work
- 3) Sign off from professional chartered engineer/chartered surveyor that oversaw the work
- 4) Building regulations approval for both the main house and the outbuilding.

Company: X
Address: X
Tel: X
Mobile: X
Website: X

Company: X
Address: X
Tel: X
Email: X
Website: X

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Designated Defective Housing
Page from Building Research Establishment Database of
Non-Traditional Buildings

Airey (P003)	Schindler (S049)
Ayrshire County Council (P010)	Smith (P107)
Blackburn Orlit (P024)	Stent (P110)
Boot Beaucrete (P025)	Stonecrete (P113)
Boot Pier and Panel (P026)	Tarran Temporary Bungalow (P115)
Boswell (S007)	Tee Beam (P117)
Cornish Unit Type I (P039)	Ulster Cottage (P122)
Cornish Unit Type II (P040)	Underdown (P123)
Dorran (P046)	Unitroy (P126)
Dyke (P047)	Unity Type I (P127)
Gregory (P055)	Unity Type II (P128)
Mac-Girling (P078)	Waller (P129)
Myton (P087)	Wates (P130)
Newland (P090)	Wessex (P132)
Orlit (P091, P092)	Whitson-Fairhurst (P134)
Parkinson (P094)	Winget (P137)
Reema Hollow Panel (P101)	Woolaway (P138)

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THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS **PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS**

Here is our quick guide to the Regulations, but please take further advice from a qualified and experienced electrician.

From 1st January 2005, people carrying out electrical work in homes and gardens in England and Wales must follow new rules in the building regulations. All significant electrical work carried out in the home will have to be undertaken by a registered installer or be approved and certified by the local authority's building control department. Failure to do so will be a legal offence and could result in a fine. Non-certified work could also put your household insurance policy at risk.

If you can't provide evidence that any electrical installation work complies with the new regulations, you could have problems when it comes to selling the property.

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

1. A certificate showing the work has been done by a Government-approved electrical installer - NICEIC Electrical Contractor or equivalent trades body.
2. A certificate from the local authority saying that the installation has approval under the building regulations.

Homeowners will still be able to do some minor electrical jobs themselves. To help you, we've put together this brief list of dos and don'ts.

Work You Cannot do Yourself

- Complete new or rewiring jobs.
- Fuse box changes.
- Adding lighting points to an existing circuit in a 'special location' like the kitchen, bathroom or garden.
- Installing electrical earth connections to pipework and metalwork.
- Adding a new circuit.

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INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

We used to include within our reports articles on the property market that we thought would be of interest and informative to you, however we were concerned that in some cases these did not offer the latest information. We have therefore decided to recommend various websites to you, however it is important to realise the vested interest the parties may have and the limits to the information.

www.landreg.org.uk

This records the ownership of interests in registered land in England and Wales and issues a residential property price report quarterly, which is free of charge. The Land Registry is a Government body and records all transactions as far as we are aware, although critics of it would argue that the information is often many months out of date.

www.rics.org.uk

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors offer quarterly reports via their members. Although this has been criticised as being subjective and also limited, historically their predictions have been found to be reasonably accurate.

www.halifax.co.uk and www.nationwide.co.uk

Surveys have been carried out by these two companies, one now a bank and the other a building society for many years. Information from these surveys is often carried in the national press. It should be remembered that the surveys only relate to mortgaged properties, of which it is generally considered represents only 75% of the market. It should also be remembered that the national coverage of the two companies differs and that they may be offering various incentives on different mortgages, which may taint the quality of information offered. That said they do try to adjust for this, the success or otherwise of this is hard to establish.

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www.hometrack.co.uk

This gives information with regard to house sale and purchase prices.

www.motleyfool.co.uk

We also like the Motley Fool website which is a general financial site and although it is selling financial services and other services they do tend to give a very readable view of the housing market.

www.rightmove.co.uk

This is probably the largest Internet search engine for estate agency sales and also has useful information with regard to prices of property (but it is not the same as having a chartered surveyor value it).

www.zoopla.co.uk

This is a good website for seeing the prices of properties for sale in a certain postcode area.

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Sources of information

Our source of this investigation of non-traditional houses has been produced from our data base, by examination of Building Research Establishment (BRE) material on traditional houses and a visual inspection.

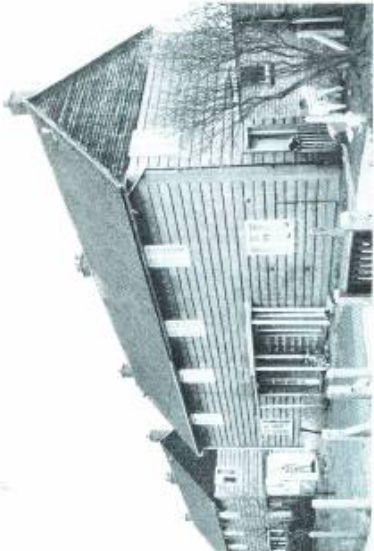
Manufacturer: W. Atay & Sons Ltd
R. Costain Ltd

Designer: Frederick Gibberd

Period built: 1949-50

Number built: 25,000

Alternative name: Alcester improved double house



IDENTIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS

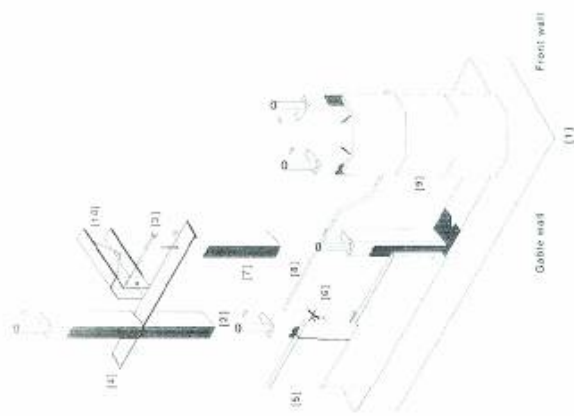
2-storey semi-detached houses.
Medium or steep pitch gabled or gable roof covered with tiles or flat roof covered with bitumastic felt.
External walls of exposed aggregate PRC, bonds through with white or cream chipping lower panels.
Sill and PRC lintels.
Timbering or horizontal timber boarding to gable apex.

NOTES FOR SURVEYORS

Cracking of PRC columns.
Water penetration through PRC panels.
High lintels; contact in PRC panels.

REFERENCES

BRE Record BR 20
BRE Report 275
PWBS No. 2.3



CONSTRUCTION

Substructure: Concrete foundation bases [1], PRC external walls [2], concrete PRC internal walls [3], reinforced vertically with 1.5" steel lugs. Steel sward [2] to timber reinforcement connection at first floor level. Steel lacing [4] at first floor level. 3" x 3 1/2" strap-bolts [5] to columns. [6] to columns, blumastic sills [7], concrete lintels [8] on timber battens [8], PC cavity panels [9].

Partitions: Timber stud lined with plyboard.

Flooring: Concrete on brickwork.

Roof: Timber trusses, bitumastic felt and tiles.

VARIANTS

Separating wall of PRC columns and PRC panel cavity wall.

Timber fin floor joists with end plates.

Clearer concrete blocks.

Flat roof of lattice steel joists, timber boarding and bitumastic felt.

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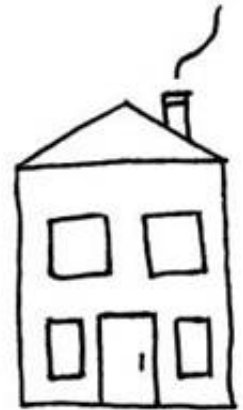


Non-Traditional Housing

If you need help and advice with regard to independent valuations, property surveys, building surveys, structural reports, engineers reports, defects surveys and structural surveys matters please free phone 0800 298 5424 for a friendly chat with one of our chartered surveyors.

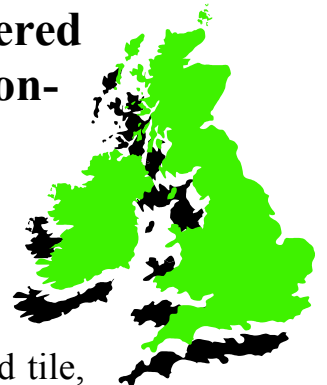
Non-traditional housing, what is it?

We have recently had a phone call asking what non-traditional housing is, as it had been referred to in a valuation that they had had carried out on their property and the lender had decided not to lend on the property because of this. Yet, from what they could see the property was in good order and they knew the person who had lived in it for the past thirty years, with no problems whatsoever. They went and had a look at the property again and it still looked to them like a traditional house and to be in good order. What was more they liked it and it had a big garden too and they were mystified why they couldn't get a mortgage on it.



What do Valuers, chartered surveyors and chartered building surveyors mean when they say non-traditional construction?

It would probably be a better term if the term non-typical construction was used. If you think of a house or a flat and think how they are traditionally built, from the Victorian era it is of brick and tile, or brick and slate, or stone and slate, or possibly render and tile, or render and slate depending upon which part of the country you are from this will be the traditional construction in the area of England, Wales, Scotland or Ireland that you live in. Often traditional construction is as local as the county or Town you live in. Nevertheless, it is known as traditional construction.



What is traditional construction? Because equally we could argue that timber frame construction is the traditional type of construction in most areas of the country, but we will leave that argument up for another day.

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Where did the term non-traditional construction and traditional construction come from?

We believe it came originally from the mortgage companies as a chartered building surveyor would certainly be more specific with regard to what the construction type is. We believe it was generated by the mortgage companies because they wanted to establish how the vast majority of properties were built and so appeared the terms traditional construction and non-traditional construction.

Non-Traditional construction

Non-traditional construction can really be classed as construction techniques that utilise systems of building, focused on speed and economy of construction. It is the sort of construction that is used where a great deal of housing is required quickly, so it is often used by local authorities to mass build (although today it is also used by commercial construction companies and developers). We have carried out surveys on many different types of non-traditional construction.

This resulted in some one-off designs but the majority of them fall into the category of:

1. Metal frame
2. Concrete frame
3. Timber frame
4. Concrete panel construction
5. Structural insulation panels
6. In situ concrete
7. One-offs

We know we are cheating really with the last category but it is the best way we can think of explaining it.

The absolute bible for this, although it is getting slightly dated is:

Non Traditional Houses – Identifying Non-Traditional Houses in the UK 1918
to 1975 BR469
Compiled and Edited by
Harry Harrison, Stephen Mullin, Barry Reeves and Alan Stevens.
Published by BRE Press (Building Research Establishment).

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Many years ago the Building Research Establishment (known as BRE) were part of a Government organisation with the Property Services Agency (PSA) which we would say were the undisputed experts on construction and building problems along with a few Universities such as Reading and Salford Universities who looked on the more academic side. However, we would also say that things have changed with commercialism.

We cannot recommend this book highly enough although it will set you back several hundreds of pounds, possibly worth using a search engine to see if you can pick up a second hand copy somewhere.

After the Great Wars we needed houses and homes

In the UK after World War I and World War II our housing stock had been bombed and made safe by being demolished so there were fewer houses. There had also been a lack of maintenance over the war years, as the workforce had been at war, and then the armed forces men were returning and they needed houses quickly. Various methods of non-traditional construction were proposed and built in the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's.

Also, this type of construction has been used during boom years, such as the early 1970's and the late 1980's, where it was hard to build quickly enough for supply and demand. Our comments relate to the UK, there are even variations in the UK.

Non-traditional construction by another name

After the war years we had to build fast and we used many new forms of construction techniques. We will name a few here; these names may have been given to you when you looked at buying a house. We will carry out a brief description of them or you could telephone us on 0800 298 5424:

Airey Houses

These have a concrete plank externally supported on a pre-cast concrete frame with steel tube reinforcements.

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Airey houses were made up of concrete planks and are now generally being knocked down and rebuilt as they are not habitable



Street view.

They were named Airey houses after the Member of Parliament that was involved with them rather than the fact that the wind blew through them and they suffered badly from condensation.

Boot

Believed to be named after the contractor of that name. Built on a concrete frame with more traditional brickwork or render typically found externally.

Cornish Unit

Although they are called Cornish Units, we have found them all over the country. They come in various makes and models as do the other houses that we mention. They were traditionally constructed with a concrete frame. The unusual thing was the mansard roofs that ran all the way down to the first floor level.

Dorran

These were pre-cast concrete panel buildings with a concrete ring beam at first floor level with a timber frame internally.

Dye Construction

This was concrete panels which were a storey height secured by metal angle brackets (believed to be steel) with concrete beams forming the first floor.

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Gregory

This is pre-cast concrete, storey height columns with ring beams. These have mansard roofs to first floor level.

Myton

These are concrete panels.

Newland

Steel frame.

Orlit

A feature of these is that they may have a flat roof with an asphalt finish.

Parkinson

These are concrete column construction with a render or pebbledash finish externally.

Reema

Hollow panel. These are structural concrete columns and beams cast in situ.

Stonecret

This is pre-cast reinforced concrete frame with concrete panels, two storeys in height.

Tarran

Pre-cast concrete panels with first floor ring beam. The panels are very wide.

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Unity and Butterly

Pre-cast concrete column, metal plated beams. An unusual external finish of a small looking concrete panel.

Wates

Believed to be named after the contractor of that name. Pre-cast reinforced concrete panels with ring beams at first floor level.

Wessex

Pre-cast reinforced panels.

Wimpey No Fines

In situ mould type no fines concrete with a variety of different thickness of walls depending upon the age and type.

Laing Easyform

Comes in both solid and cavity wall forms built from a no fines concrete.

Arrowhead

Steel structural frame albeit that it is lightweight. They tend to have cladding to the front of them.

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British Iron and Steel Federation House known as a BISF

These are relatively common although they are now very well disguised with brickwork being built around them. They are a lightweight structural steel frame.



British Iron and Steel Federation House (BISF)



Asbestos roof on BISF house

Dorlonco

They have a very well hidden structural metal frame.

Hawthorn Leslie

This is a mixture of both a metal frame and a timber frame.

Howard

We have come across quite a number of these in our surveys. This uses a lattice work of metal beams.

Lowton Cubit

Possibly named after the contractor. Again this is a steel framed building.

Thorncliffe

Cast iron panels bolted together.

Swedish timber dwelling

Built with a timber frame.

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Reema conclad

This is a good example of a large panel concrete house.

This is but a brief run-through of some of the non-traditional houses. There are many, many different types. We have surveyed ones where there are only a few thousand ever produced and we have also surveyed other types of non-traditional houses where there are many thousands produced. In our experience as chartered surveyors they all need their own individual survey as they have their own unique problems.

It may look traditional construction even though it is non-traditional

With the purchasing of these houses over the years and the need to get a mortgage there have been many ingenious ways of making these houses mortgageable as per the following photographs of houses where we have carried out surveys; these are the ones that have been spotted by mortgage company valuers:



Modified non-traditional house



Brick clad modified non traditional house



Brick cladding and other alterations make a non traditional house mortgageable

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A mortgage company surveyor may miss a non-traditional house construction

We have now been called in several times to do a Building Surveyor where the owners have not known that the type of construction is non-traditional construction even though they have had a mortgage company valuation. Unfortunately, this is due to a lack of knowledge and experience with mortgage Valuers. After all, valuation experts are not building construction experts. We have come across the issue, if it looks traditional construction even though it is constructed in a non-traditional way it may be counted as traditional construction! This tends to be the case where a Valuer has failed to notice the construction type and when we come to carry out a building survey we then identify it. Unfortunately, this then means that whoever is purchasing has a very limited mortgage market available to them.

Who lends on a non-traditional construction building?

The answer is the companies interested in lending in this market vary depending on many factors. What is also true is that lenders do vary their lending policies and they may be lending on it one minute and then not lending on it the next.

Modern timber frame houses – are they non-traditional construction?

It could be argued that the houses being built, in what is known as modern timber frame, are as far away from traditional construction as houses that have been classed as non-traditional construction! They have, for example, been built out of concrete.

And this is where non-traditional construction gets really confusing

However, this is where non-traditional construction really is confusing as some non-traditional construction techniques look very similar to traditional construction techniques and can only be identified by the trained experienced eye (we are more than happy to chat about this, please free phone us on 0800 298 5424). As mentioned, even more confusing is there are some non-traditional constructions that are accepted by the banks, building societies and mortgage lenders and others that are not, assuming that the bank valuation surveyor spots them. It is so important to know whether banks, building societies and mortgage lenders will lend on this type of construction if you are considering purchasing.

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Is it the way the structure works that makes a building traditional or non-traditional construction

To expand on this, a traditional old style timber frame property is built of oak to a one-off design. It certainly could be classed as the original traditional construction, as most houses were built in this form. However, in more recent times traditional construction has been thought of as brick and tile, or brick and slate, or stone and tile, stone and slate, etc, as we mentioned earlier.



When the original non-traditional housing was built there wasn't too much thought given to making it look externally like a traditional building. Therefore, some complained that they seem to have concrete finishes, be it painted concrete, which looks similar to render, or concrete planks, as in the Airey buildings. We would argue as these were easily identifiable and stood out they were more a target for mortgage lenders not lending on non-traditional construction that looks like traditional construction.

Modern timber frame construction that is non-traditional but will be lent on

Let us first of all explain what modern timber frame construction is. They are very much an engineered timber frame that is an absolute minimum of timber and maximum strength characteristics. The majority are factory made and factory assembled and are built in mass, rather than being a one-off design and they have an external cladding for protection, often brickwork, although in more recent years we have noticed in our surveys that render has been used, or cladding panels of timber and also plastic lookalike timber. Modern timber frame properties are also finished with a membrane to stop any dampness from the external walls getting through (we have seen in our surveys where it does happen it can distort or rot), as it can be in a traditional timber frame property.

The whole idea behind a modern timber frame construction is completely different; we would term a water construction. This is completely different to the traditional timber frame property that was built to breathe. However, the modern timber frame property



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is then clad with brickwork or stone or cladding, such as vertical tiling, and looks very much like a traditional property.

The whole construction is based around the economics of cheap construction and fast construction, and this type of construction is very much assembled, rather than built by tradesmen, the de-skilling being another element in the economics of the construction. However, when all is said and done the mortgage companies, such as the banks and building societies do lend against it.

We have seen during our surveys other more recent innovations within the modern timber frame market, such as using composite wood products for floor joists and also for the flooring, together with an increased use of external cladding, as it is more economical and faster to put up than brickwork.



Not lending against non-traditional construction

Interestingly, the techniques utilised for non-traditional construction after the war years tended to use more robust materials and more innovation. They fall into three categories:-

- Structural frame
- Large panel construction
- Innovative construction

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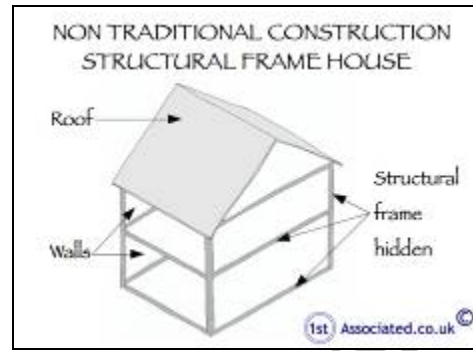
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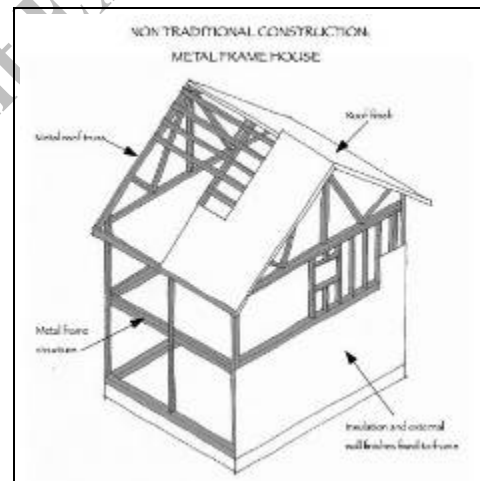
Structural frame

This was very much where a structural frame was erected. The walls were then hung off it. The structural frames can be metal, concrete or wood. The danger factor for a mortgage company lending on this is if there is deterioration within the structural frame that is hidden, we would pick this up during a survey therefore it is critical that a Building Survey is carried out prior to purchasing a non-traditional property. A lot of Local Authority housing was built in this manner, and other National companies requiring housing, such as the Coal Board, and utilising mass production techniques lowered the cost of the housing. These types of houses also tended to use techniques that we hadn't used before in the housing market, although often we would use them in the commercial market.



Metal Frame Structure

Below are photographs of a metal frame house that we have recently surveyed.



Original condition of non-traditional house with roof replacement



Close up of cladding on non-traditional house



Non-traditional metal frame house

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Painted cladding to non-traditional property



Close up of old metal windows in a non-traditional house

Features to look out for in non-traditional houses

We thought we would give you some tips on the sort of things to look out for:

Chimneys

Asbestos was a very popular material (yes really) when non-traditional houses were being built.



Asbestos original chimney non traditional house



New chimney on a non-traditional house



Soil and vent pipe



Original asbestos soil and vent pipe on a non-traditional house



New plastic soil and vent pipe on a non-traditional house

Roof Construction

It is important to get in the roof and have a close look or for you to employ a chartered building surveyor that will get in the roof and have a close look (Valuers no longer need to view roofs when carrying out valuations – did you know that?). The below photos are what our surveyor saw on a recent survey:



Rusting to a lightweight metal frame or damage or deterioration to the metal frame of a non-traditional house



Some fixings replacements/repairs to a non-traditional house



The adding of modern things can affect the building

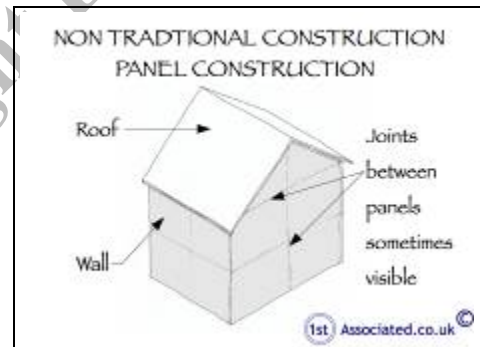
It is very common these days to have a shower/bathroom with an extract system. Does that extract system discharge into the roof or does it discharge out of the building? If it discharges into the roof then there can be problems with rusting and corroding of metal and dampness to timber.



Extract vent to outside often discharges into roof which is essential that they do not in this type of roof

Large panel construction

This, as the name suggests, is where rather than building small brick after small brick we used large panels, usually of concrete, which in themselves were a storey height and similar width, about two and a half metres square, and they literally interlocked. There have been problems with the reinforcement used in these and the connections of them, but we haven't come across these problems in the many years that we have been surveying.



Large panel concrete non-traditional house



Jointing to a non-traditional house



General view of a development of non-traditional houses



Innovatory construction

We couldn't think of a better title for this section, but we basically mean constructions that used innovation to look at building houses in a completely new way. An example is the Wimpey no fines concrete system, which is popular and, as far as we know, mortgage companies will lend upon it. It utilises almost a moulding system using form work. There is also pod construction, which is drilling pre-fabricated units, craned and positioned into place and then an outer protective shell put around them. Lots of this type of construction was originally carried out by local authorities, as they had the pressure on them to build a large number of houses, and more recently by commercial companies, which had the pressure on them to make profits or returns for their investors.

Non-traditional houses becoming traditional houses?

We have seen during our surveys over the years there has been a need to convert non-traditional housing into traditional housing. It could be argued that the right to buy Council Housing stock made this an important factor, as it is those people who required a mortgage that required the amendments, as in many cases there was nothing physically wrong with the properties.

Also, large companies holding a large amount of housing stock, such as Council Housing and Housing Associations requiring the housing to be brought up to more modern standards for thermal efficiency, etc, have utilised innovative ways of upgrading (although we are not sure whether that's the right term). Their housing techniques normally involve a cladding system to improve thermal efficiency, along with the check on the structural elements. We have surveyed some of them where they practically re-build the original buildings, which ironically can be very difficult. Whilst we don't know the exact figures we imagine it would be almost as costly as building the property from scratch.

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Whistle-stop tour of the non-traditional housing market

There are whole books dedicated to this area, so an article such as this can hardly present the subject of non-traditional housing in detail, but we hope this has given you a flavour and an interest for the subject.

If you truly do want an independent expert opinion from a chartered surveyor, or a chartered building surveyor and are particularly interested in carrying out work on modern timber frame properties and if you are buying such a property please look at our survey examples. We feel our surveys are quite unique, as they are written to your level of knowledge. The surveys include photos and sketches and definitions. The survey will also include an action required section and an estimate of costs in the executive summary. We are more than happy to meet you at the property whilst carrying out the survey to discuss any specific issues you may have or have a general chat about what we have found at the end of the survey. Please contact 0800 298 5424 for a chartered surveyor to give you a call back.

We hope you found the article on Non-Traditional Housing of use and if you have any experiences that you feel should be added to this article that would benefit others, or you feel that some of the information that we have put is wrong then please do not hesitate to contact us (we are only human).

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