

APP-D3505-C-25-3376611

Officer Site Visit Notes from visit undertaken 27.02.2026

Officers in attendance – David Steel, Chloe Anderson.

Chloe and I parked along the High Road in Leavenheath approximately opposite the entrance to Edies Lane. We met approximately 12:40pm.

Weather conditions – Light drizzle, light winds, good general visibility.

Chloe and I proceeded in one car to Edies Lane and parked outside no.30's land along their front row of what appeared to be laurel hedging. The main gate of the property, a 5-bar white metal gate, was closed but not locked. At the time of our arrival a white sign-written van also arrived which appeared to belong to a solar panel and electrical installation business. The van proceeded into the site ahead of us and then parked near the garage serving the property to seemingly take a delivery or to make one.

We approached the front door of the property and were greeted by Mrs. Willis, we confirmed the purpose of the visit was to take measurements and photographs and observations of the site, land, buildings. She consented to our entry, and I asked if anyone else would be joining us and she confirmed Mr. Willis who was also present would be accompanying us.

I reiterated that we would be taking measurements and photos etc, Mr. Willis advised that he would also be taking photos, notes and recordings of our visit as well as noting any measurements and their locations.

It is noted and advised that all measurements on site were subject to mutual agreement of position and accuracy by both Enforcement Officers present, and Mr. & Mrs Willis who queried and confirmed each measurement and our reasons for taking them as the visit progressed. A point of accuracy and possible contention may be that Mr. & Mrs Willis advised they were unhappy with the use and interpretation of measurements taken with the laser measuring device belonging to David, but its use and position of readings to be taken was agreed and clarified before we proceeded further with its use. Where possible and more practical to do so, measurements were instead taken with a 50m reel tape, and an 8m measuring tape.

The first measurement on-site taken was that of distance from the line of the rear elevation of the main dwelling to the line of the northern wall of the building under construction. A straight line running commensurate with the shared boundary fence on the east side of site running alongside no.30a. The distance measured was 34.40m.

The shed was then measured with the dimensions as per the below.

L: 1555mm

W: 3250mm

H: Approx 2150mm (not including the measuring device)

Distance from shared boundary: 225mm

It was advised by the appellants that the shared boundary fence was not in a great state of repair and upkeep, and it did move. We agreed a point for it to be considered upright and stable enough for a satisfactory measurement between the shed and fence / shared boundary.

The height to an accurate and specific figure was difficult to ascertain due to long grass, and a concrete (or similar) footpad.

The height was the highest / maximum extent of the shed and it is noted that it has a single-pitch roof with a slight fall South to North.

Mr. Willis challenged me on whether a shed was a building and said it was a shed for children's bikes. I advised that in my assessment the shed would be considered a building and I believe it met the relevant "Skerrit's" test.

The next set of measurements concerned the building under construction. The initial measurement was to establish the distance from the shared boundary / fence at the rear of no.30a.

The distance measured was from the northeast corner of the building under construction to the outside and seemingly final external finish of the wall.

Distance from boundary – approximately 3000mm (as measured by tape measure, another distance by the laser device was 2929mm)

I asked and sought to clarify the point of taking measurements for any area of maximum extent of earth removal / excavation and areas of where poured concrete or other materials extending from the building and directly related to its construction at ground level might be, this was challenged by the appellants and they said it was builders infill (or similar phrasing / words to that effect).

The next set of measurements concerned the current maximum extent of height of the building under construction. It is noted that the building is not materially complete and the measurements taken are best available when accounting for ground and other conditions.

From internal slab to the highest point of a corner formed of breeze blocks in the Northwest of the building, the blocks form part of the internal wall / skin of the building – Height: 2460mm approx.

The appellant's sought to ensure accuracy in their opinion of the height of the building from the exterior, it was necessary to use a ladder to achieve this and the appellant's provided a wooden board at ground level and another board at the top of the building to assist with this measurement, this measure was taken with the laser device – Height: 2208mm

Building width, initially measured with tape reel and found to be 6100mm, this was challenged by the appellants as they stated the measure was dropping along its length and would add distance to the measure. The process of using the provided board and David's laser measure was repeated and the width was re-measured as – Width: 5988mm

The building's length was measured by same method as per the width. Building Length: 11856mm.

Mr. Willis advised when I queried if the building was ordered / commissioned as 12m x 6m, and he confirmed this to be the case.

Following the measuring of the building under construction I then proceeded to take photos of the site and surroundings from various points, I stated to Mr. Willis that it must be challenging / difficult to connect the building in respect of soil / waste WC connection and that I had observed pipes around the building under construction. He and Mrs. Willis both stated that the pipes were to protect wiring or similar words to that effect, I did again state the noted WC on plans I had seen but they did not offer any substantive reply to this.

We then measured the width / extent of the area of excavation and connection on the West side of the building under construction where there was further evidence of connection or works that might speak to possible connection. This was challenged by the appellants, but Chloe advised that "connection" is part of the development, they allowed us to measure this, and it was found to be approximately 200mm with an offshoot going further to the west. I asked if the extent of the "gap" around the building would be the same 200mm and Mr. Willis advised it would not and mentioned something around cost of materials etc.

I chose to not further pursue the matter of the gap and connection etc around the building and took no further measurements around this, as the appellants were in my opinion starting to become agitated.

We then measured the distance between the concrete post at the Southwest of the neighbouring boundary fence but the photos of the measurements do not appear to have saved onto the iPad, but the distance for the purposes of this visit and creation of a plan will be able to be worked out from the other measurements taken and should be sufficient for the creation of the plan.

Further pictures around the site were taken, Mr. Willis challenged why I would be taking pictures of the area to the south containing the (now) bulk of trees etc. and I advised that the red line of the notice / site plan was inclusive of this area it was part of our enquiries and would assist us with knowing the current state of the site.

The appellants made comments around the Council needing to investigate others for breaches elsewhere in the area and I did confirm I was aware of some alleged matters being raised but that whilst some of the issues may feature in my photos, that I was not on site to investigate these, and furthermore with no current "active" case being allocated to me for these matters (in respect of fences and land at the rear of properties neighbouring no.30, 30a etc.) that this would be required before I dedicated time and resources to these. Mrs. Willis made a comment about treating everyone "equally" in regard to opening cases and I confirmed that we did indeed open and assess cases in the same way for alleged breaches.

The appellants made further comments about fallen / damaged trees and fences to me, but I was not clear on why they were describing this and did not further that conversation.

Appellants stated that the building under construction was with the agreement / awareness of building control who stated that it was within permitted development, I replied that matters of BC and planning, whilst both council functions, were separate matters.

Additional observations –

There are various building and construction materials around site, of interest is a blue tarpaulin covering what I observed on previous visits understood to be pre-assembled roof supports / trusses (or similar) in a triangular (speaking to a dual-pitched roof being the intention). These could not be measured, however comparison to the height of the current building and brick courses is available through the pictures obtained on site. The trusses appear to be equal to approximately 6 of the “breeze blocks” plus mortar joints.

Presuming a standard breeze block of 215mm, plus standard joint thickness of 10mm.

$$215 \times 6 = 1290$$

$$10 \times 6 = 60$$

$$\text{Total} = 1350$$

Furthermore, we currently do not know the ultimate extent of the building’s rise, any additions to be made further in respect of materials and finish to roof and ridge, plate / bearing. It is also noteworthy that the amount of overhang of the final roof cannot be known, as is the height of the eaves which in respect of a Class E outbuilding would be restricted to 2.5m above ground level.

A Damp Proof Course was seemingly in place, positioned above the brick courses forming the bottom of the building, and where breeze blocks (or similar) then started. The inference being that if a BC compliant building is being enacted that the DPC would be 150mm above the ground level.

It was also stated by the appellants during the visit that the building was unfinished and they made various remarks around how matters could be assessed (regarding it being PD) when this was the case.

Further and final pictures of the site, including some from outside of the appellant’s property were taken and then Chloe and I left site at approximately 13:50pm.