

THE MODERN HOUSE



Ashted, Surrey
£1,600,000 Freehold

Forest Lodge House

Designed in 1967 by one of Britain's most celebrated post-war architects, Michael Manser, this sophisticated, single-storey modern home lies low in a quiet and peaceful walled garden in the historic village of Ashted, Surrey. The design follows a striking minimalist aesthetic echoing the Californian Case Study houses, characterised by expansive glass walls, geometric elevations and an excellent quality of natural light. Sensitively extended under the supervision of Manser, the internal living space spans over 3,000 sq ft, with floor-to-ceiling glass walls framing views of the garden from every room. In 2003, English Heritage awarded the original parts of the house a Grade II-listing, calling it "an important and rare example of a modern steel house by a key architect".

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The Architect

Pioneering British modernist and former RIBA President Michael Manser (1929–2016) developed a distinctive and remarkably consistent architectural style. Drawing influence from the key players in European modernism, Mies van der Rohe in particular, Manser was also significantly influenced by his modernist contemporaries, many of whom he knew personally through his journalistic work in the 1950s and 1960s, including Peter Wormersley and Gerald Beech. In 1983 he was elected President of the RIBA, where he remained a staunch advocate of modernism during his two-year stint.

The Tour

Manser made his name with a series of modernist rural houses across the UK; this home bears all of the signature hallmarks of his work. Industrial steel frames glass walls, creating a refined sense of materiality through the interior living spaces that flow freely across a lateral plan. Strategically orientated to optimise the southerly aspect, the main living spaces are built in a neat rectangular grid to exacting proportions. An arterial glass corridor connects to the extended section, housed in the easterly wing.

Occupying a secluded position in the grounds of Forest Lodge House, a quiet residential area at the edge of the village, the house lies low in the topography of the site. Barely visible from the approach on Epsom Road, the plot is bounded by a dense layer of green hedging and tall specimen trees, ensuring excellent seclusion and a tranquil backdrop.

Entry is from the south-easterly side, leading through to a generous hallway providing circulation to the living areas and four of the five bedrooms. Timber-lined walls and ceilings retain the mid-century character, while expansive glass walls in the primary living room create a seamless relationship between the architecture and its natural setting. Sliding glazed doors open directly onto the lawns. Full-height bookcases line the dining room wall, and skylights borrow light from above.

In alignment with the rest of the house, the adjacent kitchen has been cleverly conceived for the practicalities of life. It is a bright space with appliances neatly housed within clean lines of storage and a generous provision of work surfaces for cooking—an expansive window frames leafy views of the gardens.

The four bedrooms in this section of the home are beautifully proportioned, each with plenty of bespoke cabinetry and garden views. Corner glazing in the main bedroom optimises the westerly aspect, capturing the soft warmth of later daylight hours. An en suite bathroom has a bath and is interconnected; a family bathroom, also with a bathtub, serves the other three double bedrooms.

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The arterial corridor is lined with cabinetry and visually connects to gardens and an inner courtyard while providing access to the self-contained living space and a fifth bedroom. Sliding glass doors open to the gardens from here, and skylights draw further light from overhead. A brick fireplace raised above a concrete hearth is positioned centrally, and the bedroom, shower room, and kitchenette complete this section of the house.

Outdoor Space

Rich in biodiversity and teeming with local wildlife, the gardens visually connect to the house from all sides, forming an integral backdrop to the living spaces, which feel immersed in their natural setting. Decked seating areas have been carefully positioned to align with the rising and setting sun, creating welcoming terraces for eating and entertaining throughout the seasons. More intimate spaces for coffee or a glass of wine are tucked beneath the tree canopies.

The Area

The home lies in a quiet residential pocket of the popular Surrey village of Ashted. Ashted High Street is around a 20-minute walk away, a bustling line of independent retailers, restaurants and a large M&S Foodhall. For a wider selection, there are the nearby towns of Epsom, Leatherhead and Kingston-Upon-Thames.

The location offers immediate access to the extensive network of bridleways, walking and cycling routes throughout the surrounding open countryside, much of which is National Trust and Green Belt. For immediate open green space, there is a large green area in the village known as Ashted Common, and further afield, there are the Epsom Downs, Box Hill and the Surrey Hills. The area has an active, friendly community of bowls, tennis and squash clubs and several golf courses nearby.

There are also some excellent places to eat in the nearby villages, including Michelin-starred The Clock House, the much-loved Anchor in Ripley, the Michelin-starred Sorrel in Dorking and several local vineyards, including Albury Vineyard and Greyfriars Vineyard, High Clandon Estate Vineyard and Denbies Wine Estate, Dorking.

The house lies within the catchment area for several well-considered schools, including City of London Freeman's School in nearby Ashstead Park (within walking distance) and St. Giles Infant School.

The location is also excellent for easy London commuting. Ashstead mainline station is within easy reach – 15 minutes on foot or a five-minute cycle. Direct services from here run to Waterloo, London Bridge and Victoria. Located inside the M25, Ashstead has very good access to London and the Surrey countryside also by road.

Council Tax Band: G

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About

The Modern House is an estate agency that helps people live in more thoughtful and beautiful ways. We believe in design as a powerful force for good. Inspired by the principles of modernism, we represent design-led homes across the UK which celebrate light, space and a truth to materials. Esquire credits The Modern House with “rewriting the rulebook on estate agency” and GQ voted us “one of the best things in the world”.