

THE MODERN HOUSE



Melrose, Scottish Borders
Sold

Dingleton Road

This three-bedroom mid-century house occupies an idyllic elevated position at the foot of the Eildon Hills in Melrose, a sought-after town in the Scottish Borders. Subject to an extensive, sensitive renovation in recent years, the single storey home beautifully exhibits the innovative spirit of modernist residential design. The house lies centrally within a large private garden and woodland. It is surrounded by rolling hillsides, lending it a wonderfully rural feeling, yet Edinburgh is easily reachable at less than 40 miles to the north.

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The Architect

The house and garden were thought to have originally been designed by the late architect Hamish Bremner. An extension and decked terraces were then added in 1977 by Ron Russell, a Principal Architect to the celebrated Peter Womersley from 1965 to 1972. Collaborating, they worked together on the design of a Health Centre in Kelso; a modernist structure, comprising round towers of white render, glass and slate. Womersley also designed Klein House, one of the finest mid-century houses in Britain, built for the textile designer Bernat Klein and sold through The Modern House in 2017.

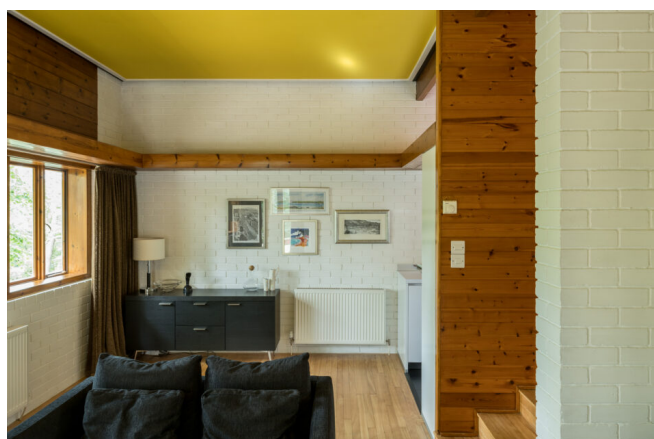
The Tour

A sweeping private driveway rises between the trees and woods that scatter the surrounding hillsides. The house, footed on a centrally located horizontal plane and enveloped by south-west-facing sun terraces, tiered gardens and grassy banks, is embedded within this inviting green backdrop. The design of the house nods to Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian houses, with their simple grid pattern layouts, flat roofs, cantilevered overhangs and use of natural light.

The house is a sophisticated exploration of linear forms; a wonderful example of architecture in harmony with its rural surroundings. The façade is made up of grids of exposed pink brickwork and glazed panels shaded by stepped cantilever overhangs. While essentially single storey, the house is arranged over three half levels that arguably define both the public and more private interior spaces.

The discreet entrance is tucked away at the rear, where a half-glazed door opens to a small vestibule, a handy area to hang coats. Modern interventions have been executed with a deft touch, always sympathetic to the architect's thoughtfully considered detailing. The interior aesthetic feels cosy and welcoming, perfectly in keeping with the house's surroundings and period.

An inner hallway leads down to the sunken sitting room. A sunny space, this is centred around a warming open fire and has direct access to one of three external terraces. Thin strips of timber flooring run underfoot and the walls are exposed white-painted brickwork and horizontal pine boards. The room is shaded by a flat roof canopy, which screens the south-facing living area and its wall of glass from the height of the summer sun. The colourful, practical kitchen opens directly from the sociable living area and is a bright, airy space, with dashes of a 1960s Mondrianic colour palette.



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The mid-floor family room, currently used as a separate dining space, has walls of white brick and boarding contrasting with the general soft light blue colour scheme, and timber strip flooring. Large sliding doors lead onto a sunny south-west-facing deck, extending the living areas well beyond four walls and drawing wonderful daytime and evening light into the plan. Also at this level is the main bedroom, replete with generous storage, which flows onto a sun-trapping external terrace. The family bathroom pops with colour, bright orange tiling and cupboards complementing the muted wall and ceiling boarding and chrome fittings.

A short half-flight of stairs leads directly from the family room to two further bedrooms; mirror images of one another. These both echo the mid-century atmosphere of the rest of the house and have neatly designed storage areas. A small handy shower room sits between the duo.

Outdoor Space

The house is surrounded by expansive grassy banks and pretty rockery gardens, dotted with shrubs and mature trees. The three south-west-facing sun terraces are ideal for morning coffees or evening drinks and perfect for alfresco dining. A further east-facing terrace sits just above the entrance courtyard. The grounds are a haven for wildlife, attracted by the tranquillity of the bucolic setting, including buzzards, kestrels and deer.

There is also a timber cabin that occupies an elevated woodland position. Currently used as a joinery workshop, this would work equally well as a studio space. Wrapped on two sides by decking, it provides a lovely spot to watch the sun go down.

There is abundant parking space on the levelled courtyard and plenty of handy garden storage adjacent to the greenhouse.

The Area

The house is conveniently positioned yet feels wonderfully secluded and private. Melrose town centre is less than 10-minute walk and has a vibrant, traditional high street full of renowned shops including two traditional butchers, an artisan bakery and Abbey Fine Wines. Amongst the many welcoming restaurants and pubs in Melrose are Provender Restaurant and Bar, serving contemporary Scottish and French cuisine and The Ship Inn, a lovely spot to enjoy casual drinks in the beer garden. There is a thriving cultural scene in Melrose, which holds an annual festival week. It also hosts the popular annual Borders Book Festival. An outstanding cafe, delicatessen and bookshop, The Main Street Trading Company, is located in nearby St Boswells and there is a good cafe, shop, brewery and pizzeria at Born in Scotland, near Denholm.

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This part of the Borders is famed for its unspoilt beauty and there is an abundance of sporting choices to enjoy the outdoors. Fishing is available on The River Tweed and there are many local public golf courses. Ramblers are spoilt for choice with hiking trails littering the surrounding rolling countryside. The Borders Abbey Way links the four great ruined abbeys and St Cuthbert's Way runs from Melrose to Lindisfarne. Glentress Forest is a very popular base for exciting mountain biking routes. Melrose also has an internationally known rugby sevens tournament each spring.

The local mill towns of Hawick, Selkirk and Galashiels are all within easy reach and offer opportunities to shop for cashmere and tweed at vendors such as Hawico, Johnstons of Elgin and Lovat Mill. Abbotsford, the home of the author Sir Walter Scott, lies just over two miles to the west, a short stroll on foot along bucolic countryside paths. A happy afternoon can also be spent visiting the magnificent Floors Castle & Gardens in Kelso. There is a thriving local music and drama scene, the Eastgate Theatre in Peebles, 25-miles east, hosts a year round programme of events.

The Borders Railway (re-opened in 2015) runs services from Tweedbank, two miles east of Melrose, to central Edinburgh in approximately 50 minutes. Edinburgh Airport is 46 miles north-west and Newcastle Airport is 64 miles south-east.

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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”.