The Walled Garden
Garboldisham, Norfolk
£595,000 Freehold

Arranged along the original garden wall of Garboldisham Manor’s kitchen garden, near Diss, this remarkable four-bedroom house, known as The Walled Garden, is an example of great individual invention created by Michael Neylan and William Ungless in 1978. With an extraordinary one-acre private garden contained within the high walls to the rear, and a large drive to the front, the house has a magical sense of seclusion.

As described by Pevsner, “Against is not the right word, for the wall bisects the house, giving a long one-storey range under a gabled pantile roof to the N and a smaller symmetrical mass to the S, hipped, with a row of horizontal windows under rather brooding eaves.”

Garboldisham Manor was designed by George Gilbert Scott junior and built around 1870. The main house, however, was pulled down in the 1950s but the butler’s wing survives as does the grade two-listed coach house.
The house is approached along a private road, that gives access to a handful of homes, and fronted by a large gravel drive and garden. The front of the house stretches along the tall garden wall that exceeds the height of the tiled roof, topped by an “observation turret” that sits astride the wall and carries the twin flues of the internal fireplaces.

Entrance is to a square hall, to the left of which is the pitched-roof kitchen laid with terracotta quarry tiles. The linear space connects to a utility/boot room, that has access to both the front and back gardens, and leads through to a self-contained guest room with en-suite shower room. To the right of the entrance hall is the master bedroom.

Beyond the wall is a wonderful lateral living room with a characterful Inglenook fireplace. Double doors open to a terrace and the expanse of the back garden. A staircase wraps around the back of the fireplace to the “turret bedroom”.

The living room is flanked by two further bedrooms, each with their own access to the south-facing garden. Also connected to the main structure of the house on the front or north side of the wall is a large garage and woodstore.

Aside the striking architecture of the structure, the most extraordinary aspect of the property is the rear walled garden. Contained within the original garden walls is approximately one acre of land formerly the kitchen garden of the manor house. The 15ft-high walls were designed to create a temperate micro-climate and the perfect environment for growing the plants and vegetables that supplied the household.

The garden is now arranged in a less formal fashion, more suited to domestic use. There is a courtyard garden, a well, and informal pond and an avenue of apple trees, and a large studio with wood-burning stove, as well as various garden stores. The current owners have done much to define the structure of the land by planting hornbeam, yew, beech and laurel hedges as well as an avenue of weeping pear trees. New lawns were sown and a new pond dug. Numerous scented flowering shrubs including magnolia grandiflora, myrtle, viburnums, trachelospermum jasminoides, pittosporum tobira and the delicious clove-scented ribes odoratum were planted to provide year-round perfume.
Apple, pear, plum, cherry, peach, fig, quince and mulberry trees have all been established with many trained against the walls, making use of the original wire strainers which have survived testament to the quality of the Victorian-era craftsmanship.

The house is located near the village of Garboldisham, a small village in the Breckland district of Norfolk, near the Suffolk border. The nearby market town of Diss has a wide range of independent shops and benefits from excellent rail connections to London with a journey time of around 90 minutes, and to Norwich in approximately 20 minutes. The city of Norwich and historic Bury St Edmunds are nearby, offering a range good local amenities.