

THE MODERN HOUSE



Sunbury-On-Thames, Surrey
Sold

Wheatleys Eyot II

Occupying an enviable position on the car-free island of Wheatleys Eyot, this remarkable three-bedroom house looks onto the Thames on one side and a beautiful creek on the other. Surrounded by perfect, private spots for wild swimming, the house has a separate annexe and studio, as well as a tender on the Thames. Designed to an impeccable standard by BCDH Architects, the sapele-clad building unfolds over a single storey, which rises on stilts above grasses and wildflower meadows below that make a haven for local wildlife. Wheatleys Eyot, or Wheatley's Ait as it is also known, is a small eight-hectare island in the River Thames on the reach above Sunbury Lock. It lies on the northern bank, in the borough of Sunbury-on-Thames.

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The Tour

Nestled on a secluded corner of Wheatleys Eyot, the house has a feeling of immense privacy and retreat. The relationship between the architecture and its bucolic riverside surroundings engenders an utterly unique atmosphere of peace and seclusion. The interiors operate in a similar manner of complete harmony with nature, from the pared-back material palette to the floor-to-ceiling expanses of glazing that frame arcadian vistas beyond.

The house is hidden behind a discreet white gate, which opens to reveal a sapele-clad structure on black steel stilts. The wood has been treated to ensure it weathers beautifully over time. Below, sprawling gardens unfurl, their various sections delineated by careful planting. The main house has two bedrooms; there is a separate annexe with an en suite, as well as a standalone studio space.

A grassy path leads to a steel-framed stair with concrete steps, which ascend to the front door. This swings open to reveal an immaculate home within; the living spaces are completely open-plan, executed in a simple material palette to ensure the focus is firmly on the sense of light and volume. Ceilings extend over 3 metres high, as do the full-height expanses of glazing that punctuate the walls, some sliding open to provide access to the terrace that wraps the house on two sides. Underfloor heating is concealed beneath floorboards with a textured grain to their burnt-orange hue.

The dining and living areas are illuminated by light that floods in through every aspect. One wall is clad in slate, adding a dash of texture to the space and grounding it in darker tones; a German woodburning stove creates a natural lounge area. The sense of volume and openness is aided by these clever textural shifts, which make subtle suggestions as to the use of each space.

The kitchen takes the form of a standalone island and a worktop that extends along one wall. Worktops and cabinetry are in a hard-wearing grey composite that conceals ample storage, with bespoke oak handles. There is a Smeg range cooker, a Miele dishwasher and a stainless steel sink with taps by Vola. A larder is hidden through a high, open doorway, where further storage is situated. There is also a storage cupboard in the hallway with a washer/dryer.

Two generous bedrooms occupy the corner of the plan. Both of these are dual aspect and have views directly onto the Thames through full-height glazed doors that slide open to the wraparound terrace. A wildflower meadow extends below, creating a truly idyllic view. Both rooms have built-in storage. The en suite to the main bedroom makes pared-back use of colour, with terracotta floor tiles, black fixtures and fittings and white wall tiles by Domus surrounding the walk-in shower; the bathroom in the hallway employs the same palette.

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Situated in the garden is a sizeable annexe, home to a third bedroom and en suite bathroom. The dual aspect space has views of the meadow beyond, and makes for excellent guest accommodation. A wood-burning stove ensures a warm retreat in the winter months. The en suite is illuminated by light that enters through an expansive skylight, flowing over glazed orange tiles in the walk-in shower.

There is also a studio in the garden, which would suit a variety of uses.

Outdoor Space

A bluebell-framed path winds down one side of the garden to a private creek, which is the perfect place for a spot of wild swimming or fishing. A rope swing hangs from a tree, with wild daisies and grasses peppered along the riverbank where weeping willows dip their leaves into the creek.

The house is surrounded by lush lawns and meadows, which have been lovingly planted and tended over the years. Sections of grass flow into a wildflower meadow that leads to the banks of the Thames, the turf dotted with cow parsley and bulrushes. The planting makes a haven for local wildlife, with birds, butterflies and bees all regular visitors. Views back towards the house from here are spectacular.

A separate section of the garden is home to a fire pit and seating area, with a circle of seats made from logs creating the perfect space for evening gatherings and alfresco dining in the summer months. Each space feels unique yet carefully linked together; rows of blue-flowered hedges provide privacy on one side, gently enclosing the house within.

The Area

The river plays an important role in the fascination of this house, offering an idyllic waterside lifestyle; this section of the river is non-tidal and is therefore only affected by rainfall. The current owners use a small motor boat to make trips to nearby pubs and restaurants, and to visit neighbours along the banks of the Thames. The much-loved Angel of Walton pub is just down the river and is a local favourite; there are also several good pubs around nearby Sunbury Park including Three Fishes, The Magpie and The Phoenix.

On the opposite riverbank lies a large meadow, which can be accessed by canoe and is perfect for weekend strolls. For further aquatic activities, Walton Rowing Club is also on the opposite river bank, with Shepperton Open Water swimming slightly further down the river. The expansive green space of Chertsey Meads is also close at hand, which occupies 175 acres with picnic areas dotted along the banks of the Thames.

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Lower Sunbury provides the nearest amenities, whilst the slightly larger centre of Walton is a short trip across the river. Shepperton Village has a local butcher, a bakery and a chemist. The famous Shepperton Studios, which makes up part of Pinewood Studios, is located nearby. Kempton Park Racecourse is a short distance to the north, which also holds a renowned antique fair once a month with over seven hundred dealers in attendance. For sporting activities, Sunbury Golf Course and Sunbury Cricket club are both within easy reach.

The house is conveniently located for access to the M3 and M25. Direct trains run from Shepperton station to London Waterloo with a journey time of around 50 minutes, and from Walton-on-Thames station in around 25 minutes.

Council Tax Band: C

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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”.