

THE MODERN HOUSE



Stone, Staffordshire
£975,000 Freehold

Lichfield Road

Harking to Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian concepts, this unexpected four-bedroom house occupies an idyllic position in Stone, a sought-after town in Staffordshire. Single-storey, with a low elevation and interlocking forms creating a staggered plan of shifting sightlines between the free-flowing living spaces, this home beautifully exhibits the innovative spirit of modernist residential design and epitomises indoor-outdoor living. There is an independent one-bedroom annexe, a triple garage, a characterful garden room and a plethora of sheds and stores. Surrounded by over an acre of wrapping private gardens and an incredible variety of mature trees, the house has a wonderfully rural feel while being within easy reach of Stoke-on-Trent and Stafford, less than 10 miles north and south respectively.

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The Architect

The house is thought to have originally been designed for a friend by the late architect Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, the grandson of the renowned British architect Sir George Gilbert Scott. Giles advocated a 'middle line' between tradition and modernity, seldom repeated himself, and took great care over the choice of building materials and the use of natural light. He designed down to the smallest detail, adapting readily to technical change.

Together with his iconic design for the red telephone box, he left a broad portfolio of works. In conjunction with G. F. Bodley, Giles designed the Anglican Cathedral in Liverpool, and amongst his best-known secular works are the University Library in Cambridge and Waterloo Bridge, as well as Battersea and Bankside Power Stations (now Tate Modern).

The Tour

A sweeping private driveway rises between flanking broad-leaved trees and herbaceous borders. The house, footed centrally within its one-and-a-quarter acre plot and enveloped by terraces, courtyards, gardens and verdant lawns, 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, geometric detailing, innovative use of materials and natural light.

Built in 1954, this house is a sophisticated exploration of linear forms and a wonderful example of modernist architecture in harmony with its verdant surroundings. The façades are compositions of simply detailed buff brickwork interwoven with arrays of glazed screens. Single-storey, and arranged with a central core and projecting wings, the creative layout arguably defines both the public and more private interior spaces. Simple ease of living lies at the heart of the design, where light, space and views are optimised within a loosely organised relaxed open plan. Bespoke handcrafted details have been artfully layered throughout, with bright pops of colour sitting aside a symphony of more organic hues.

The discreet entrance is tucked under a covered walkway at the front, and opens to a small vestibule with handy cupboards for coats and shoes. The interior aesthetic feels warm and welcoming, perfectly in keeping with the house's surroundings and period.

An inner hallway leads down to the sunken sitting room. A large and convivial space, bathed in abundant natural light care of its southerly-aspect wall of low-silled windows, it centres around a warming wood-burning stove and has a beautiful coffered ceiling above.

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The kitchen and dining area flow directly from this sociable living space and continue the bright and airy ambience. The kitchen is laid out to suit the practicalities of everyday living and easy entertaining with plentiful worksurfaces and storage adjacent many affable places to sit, chat and dine. A walk-in larder and a pantry sit alongside.

A further living space unfurls at the south-eastern edge of the plan and epitomises the indoor-outdoor nature of this home. Sliding glazed screens open to deep sun-trapping terraces, enticing spots for alfresco dining on warmer days. Adjacent lies a central hall, fulcrum to the more private retreats within the home. Used by the current owners as a study/library space, the walls are lined with beautifully crafted bespoke cabinetry.

Three double bedrooms occupy the eastern side of the house. While each is distinct, all echo the mid-century atmosphere of the rest of the house. They have plenty of neatly designed storage and lovely views of the garden from differing angles. A further, slightly smaller bedroom is currently used as an office, with open shelving and characterful bespoke cupboards. There is a good-sized family bathroom and a handy shower room accessed from the hallway.

A one bedroom independent annexe, complete with a kitchen, shower room and ample space to combine as a home office, lies at the end of the external covered walkway, where on the eastern fringe sits a utility room and sheltered outdoor store for logs and gardening tools

Outside Space

The house is surrounded by expansive lawns, edged and dotted with seasonal planting and beautiful mature trees.

The south-facing terraces are ideal for morning coffees, evening drinks and long, lazy alfresco suppers. With views over the large front lawn—perfect for games of cricket and football—these are terrific places to enjoy summer sunshine. Beyond is a short bridge spanning to an especial garden room. Octagonal in plan form and solidly built with a teak structure and bluey-green concave copper roof, this delightful space makes both a lovely summer retreat and perfect winter hideaway, warmed by its open fire.

The section of the garden behind the house is similarly verdant and peaceful. It has been set out as a kitchen and cutting garden and in productive years provides abundant home-grown fare.

There is a triple garage and plentiful space for several cars at the top of the driveway. Adjacent is a workshop/garden store, with WC.

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The Area

Stretching along the banks of the River Trent and the Trent and Mersey Canal, Stone is a lovely Staffordshire market town lying seven miles north of Stafford and south of Stoke-on-Trent. On the first Saturday of each month, an enticing farmers' market congregates on the Market Square, hosting over 50 stalls selling the best local organic produce and artisanal goods.

The Georgian High Street also has handy market gatherings on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, and is home to a great range of independent shops, including bakery Orme & Devine, Brydon's Butchers and the Chocbox. There are also many delicious places to dine out. The Wayfarer is a fantastic gastropub, Piazza D'Italia, a local favourite for pasta and risottos, while The Royal Exchange and the canal-side redevelopment of the historic Joules Brewery at Crown Wharf are great tap houses to enjoy craft ale.

The picturesque Westbridge Park is particularly popular with walkers, with recent innovations to the meadowland supporting local wildlife. The town's Lawn Tennis and Squash Club and 9-hole golf course are also thriving hubs. The area has wonderful rural cycle routes and easy access to the beautiful Cannock Chase AONB, less than 20 miles south of the house, where there are rambling forest walks, cycle paths and horse riding trails. These woods are considered to be J.R.R Tolkien's inspiration for Hobbiton, and the Tolkien Trail is signposted. In summer, outdoor concerts are held against a canopy of backlit trees.

Stone has an impressive range of schools, such as local primaries Christchurch, Pirehill, St Dominic's, Manor Hill, and St Michael's; all of a very high standard. Secondary schools, Walton Priory, Stafford Grammar, and St Dominic's Priory have terrific Ofsted ratings and the co-educational Alleyne's Academy is renowned for its sporting facilities. Chase Grammar and Newcastle-under-Lyme School offer excellent independent options.

Stone Station links directly to Stafford in 10 minutes, London Euston in around 80 minutes and Manchester in less than an hour. The motorway network is easily accessed via the nearby M6 and Manchester, Birmingham and East Midlands airports are all within an hour's drive. Stone also benefits from a local bus service.

Council Tax Band: F

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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”.