



SEMAPHORE HOUSE

39 PEWLEY HILL • GUILDFORD
SURREY • GU1 3SN

One of the finest and most iconic private houses
situated in the heart of Guildford



- Former Semaphore Tower believed to be built circa 1823
- Fabulous History
- Beautiful High Ceilings and Cornicing
- Exceptional Landscape Gardens and Courtyard
- Ornamental pond with decked seating area
- Outstanding Panoramic Views
- Four Spacious Reception Rooms
- Five Bedrooms • Two En Suites • Family Bathroom
- Media/Games/Gym Room
- Spa Room with Jacuzzi
- Double Garage and Garden Store
- Private Gated Entrance and Parking
- Grade II Listed
- 4545 Square Feet
- In all 0.557 Acres







THE PROPERTY

Semaphore House is one of Guildford's most highly regarded properties, situated on the slopes of Pewley Hill, only a few minutes' walk from the amazing Pewley Downs and Guildford High Street.

This unique Grade II listed property has been beautifully converted in the 1850s-60s from its origins as a vital naval communications station, in to the stunning family home you see today.

An exceptional feature of the house is the distinctive cupola (turret) which has 360 degree views spanning from Guildford town and the Cathedral across to the beautiful green Surrey Hills and as far reaching as London, Canary Wharf and the Arch at Wembley Stadium.

GARDENS AND GROUNDS

The gardens are a particularly fine feature of this fabulous home, beautifully landscaped to provide three principle areas.

The main gardens; providing large areas of level lawns, with pretty walks along stone paths bordered by manicured flower beds, timber pergola and picturesque seated pagoda - even a putting green! Symmetrically located providing the perfect backdrop is a fine feature wall of cascading water.

On the east flank a private walled courtyard provides access to the garaging and parking. Impressive red-brick pillars and stone pier caps encircle the courtyard.

Lastly to the west, wooden decking with built-in seating areas wrap around a large koi carp pond with pretty reeds, water lilies and bordered by overhanging specimen trees. This provides a tranquil setting to this exceptional property.



Semaphore House with Guildford Town Centre beyond.



SERVICES

We are advised by our clients that the property has mains water, electricity and drainage. Gas fired central heating.

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

All items usually known as tenants' fixtures and fittings, whether mentioned or not in these sales particulars are excluded from the sale but may be available by separate negotiation. Such items include all fitted carpets, curtains, light fittings, domestic electrical items, garden equipment and machinery

LOCAL AUTHORITY

Guildford Borough Council - 01483 505050.

COUNCIL TAX

Tax Band H

TENURE

For Sale Freehold

VIEWINGS

Viewing is strictly by prior appointment through either Knight Frank LLP or Savills, the joint sole selling agents.

DIRECTIONS (GUI 3AF)

From the Guildford central gyratory system, follow the A281, signed Horsham, and then almost immediately turn left onto the High Street and then right onto Quarry Street. After about 150 yards, turn left onto Castle Street, then right onto South Hill, then immediately left onto Pewley Hill. Semaphore House will be found on the left immediately after the junction with Semaphore Road.



The Pewley Downs - Just a short walk from the house

PARTICULARS DATED: NOVEMBER 2016.
PHOTOGRAPHS DATED: NOVEMBER 2016

SITUATION

(All distances and times are approximate)



- Guildford High Street : 0.3 miles
- Central London : 30.8 miles



- Guildford Mainline Station: 0.8 miles (from 34 minutes to London Waterloo)



- A3 : 1.6 miles
- M25 : 9 miles



- Heathrow : 22 miles
- Gatwick : 33.7 miles



- The Royal Grammar School, Guildford
- Guildford High School, Guildford
- Lanesborough Prep School, Guildford
- Tormead School, Guildford
- Holy Trinity Junior School, Guildford
- Pewley Down Infant School, Guildford
- St. Nicholas C of E Infants School
- Cranmore Prep School, West Horsley
- St. Catherine's School, Bramley
- Charterhouse School, Godalming
- Cranleigh School, Cranleigh



- Yvonne Arnaud
- G Live
- Electric Theatre
- Odeon Cinema



- Pit Farm Tennis Club
- Surrey Sports Park
- Spectrum Leisure Centre



- Guildford Golf Club, Merrow
- Bramley Golf Club, Bramley
- West Surrey Golf Club, Godalming
- Worplesdon Golf Course, Woking
- Clandon Regis Golf Club, West Clandon
- Cranleigh Golf and Country Club
- Sutton Green Golf Club, Sutton Green



- Goodwood Racecourse, Chichester
- Ascot Racecourse, Ascot



- Cowdray Park Polo Club, Midhurst
- Hurtwood Park Polo Club, Ewhurst



- Chichester Yacht Club, Chichester

APPROX. GROSS INTERNAL FLOOR AREA 4035 SQ FT / 375 SQ M
APPROX. GROSS INTERNAL FLOOR AREA 510 SQ FT / 47 SQ M (GARAGING)
APPROX. GROSS INTERNAL FLOOR AREA 4545 SQ FT / 422 SQ M (TOTAL)



A HISTORY OF SEMAPHORE HOUSE

By the end of the 18th century, Britain had developed into the richest world power with colonies in all parts of the world and considerable trade interests. Her navy patrolled the 7 seas bringing supplies and news and protecting the colonies, protecting trading ships and acting as a defence from other European countries who gave a threat of invasion or war. Despite the enormous distances that could then be travelled abroad, travelling and communication at home was still a slow and difficult business. In those days, before the advent of the railway or the electric telegraph, the only way of getting a long distance message to its destination quickly was by post horse, fast Royal Mail coach or by fire beacon.

The Admiralty needed to get its instructions from the Admiralty building-in the Strand to the Fleet at Portsmouth and other places as quickly as possible.

The telegraphs were only intended for temporary use in time of war and were only set up in old shacks or cottages with a few yards of garden held of the adjoining landowner at little or no rent. The stations were abandoned at the Peace of Amiens in 1802, but war broke out in May 1803 and the stations were reinstated and maintained until 1814 when peace followed the abdication of Napoleon Bonaparte. Napoleon's return from Elba in March 1815 led to an order for the re-establishment of the stations and although the Victory at Waterloo on June 18th 1815 rendered war preparations unnecessary, the Admiralty decided to maintain the signalling link with Portsmouth and Plymouth using a new system of signalling invented by Sir Home POPHAM in 1815 consisting of two arms supported on a hexagonal hollow post end worked



by bevel wheels. The system was accepted by the Admiralty in 1816 and an experimental line was set up between London and Chatham. In March of the same year the old stations were discontinued for the last time and the land again returned to the owners.

THE SEMAPHORE 1818-1849

On August 18th 1818 the Admiralty decided to establish, in permanent buildings, a semaphore between London, Portsmouth and Plymouth. Although the war was over, the telegraph was still needed to help in the suppression of smuggling and to communicate with vessels of the Inland Revenues as well as the men of war. A new line surveyed in 1818 and alternative routes proposed by the Surveyor. The experimental line to Chatham was dismantled and the materials used in the new lines. In 1820 sites were chosen for the stations which ran from the Admiralty (in the Strand) to:

- Chelsea (Royal Military Asylum)
- Putney Heath
- Kingston Hill (Telegraph Hill)
- Cooper's Hill (Esher)
- Chately Heath (Cobham, nr Pointers House)
- PEWLEY HILL (GUILDFORD)
- Bannicle Hill (Godalming)
- Haste Hill (Haslemere)
- Holder Hill (Midhurst)
- Beacon Hill
- Compton Down (or Hobbes Down) (Telegraph Hill Farm, nr Compton village)
- Camp Down (Bedhampton, nr Portsdown)
- Lumps Fort (Southsea)
- Portsmouth (A tower in the High Street)

Following the decision by the Admiralty to build the semaphore in 1818, the site for the semaphore at Guildford was chosen together with the other sites on the line. At the end of March 1821, the plot of land, about 1 acre in extent, was leased to the Admiralty by a John Peytox Shrubb for a peppercorn. A 3 storey tower was erected on the site which, like all the other semaphores was built of brick covered with brownish stucco, upon which the semaphore post was erected. The operating room was probably in the top room below the roof. The crew consisted of a Naval Lieutenant who was paid £182 10s. a year, and a handyman, good with the telescope, who could see signals at a distance of slightly under 5 miles. The station, when it opened in 1823, was in the charge of Lieut. J. Smith R.N. with an assistant, George Carpenter who received 2s. a day. In 1847, when it closed down, it was held by Lieut. James Poad R.N.



After this point, its history became rather chequered and uncertain. Little is known about the history of the house or its owners until it was bought by the Misses R and DBN Lester in August 1922 although the house was for a time a prep school. The Lester's, who were retired art teachers, used it as a social meeting place for church socials, garden parties and the like. Sunday school outings used to visit the house and apparently it was a special treat for the children to go up to the turret.

In the II World War all the stations were taken over by the Home Office (home guard) for use as lookout posts. In March 1950 the house was leased to an E S Perrot and in June 1954 the house was sold to Mr A Curtecka. Then the tower was changed from its original form to the large Victorian house we can see today. It is interesting to conjecture the shape of the original semaphore tower and see how it has influenced the design of the existing house. The attractive wooden conservatory was added, a transition from the garden to the house, so that the garden could be enjoyed in bad weather. Similarly, the folly like cupola was added to the top of the signalling tower so that the exceptional view from the top could be enjoyed in relative comfort. The cupola, or turret as the present owners call it, labels the house as unusual from a distance, and in fact, the white lead roof can be seen from most parts of Guildford. The house is now a Grade II listed building, being of special historical interest and thus its continued existence is assured.

Reference: A measured analysis and a historical survey of the Naval Telegraphic Systems by C Bowley. (September 1971)





