









The Hill, Souldern, OX27 7JE

Guide Price £475,000

**Having sold this cottage previously, we've had the privilege of seeing the care with which it's been renovated and transformed. It is a delight in every way.**

A charming C18th stone cottage exquisitely renovated with traditional materials and a real sensitivity for its character. Large & bright living room, generous kitchen, utility/boot room, three bedrooms, & a fabulous but rather unusual elevated garden overlooking fields & village!

Souldern is a small village on the North Oxfordshire border, seven miles south-east of Banbury with roots going back at least 900 years. There is an excellent pub/restaurant The Fox Inn, a Norman church and chapel, a village hall, plus play area and playing field. Banbury and Brackley are both within easy distance with a good range of shopping and leisure facilities, plus there are shops in many of the nearby villages. Bicester also offers unrivalled shopping at Bicester Village as well as a 45 minute rail service to London Marylebone. The M40 motorway at junction 10 is about three miles away and access to both Northampton and Milton Keynes is also straightforward.

When we last sold this cottage it had been in the same family for generations. While they had upgraded various items over time, it was rented out and hence no personal touch was being applied. The current owner is an engineer, and it shows. He fell in love with it, then set about making it a wonderful place to live without compromising the special feeling of tradition and character. In that he has succeeded to a degree that is quite unique. Two hundred and fifty years or more of history provide a cloak of warmth and welcome that we find irresistible. Lime-washed stone walls, pretty fireplaces, gorgeous stripped timber doors, and traditional casement windows, combine with double glazing, updated insulation, a layout change and even a hand-made, relocated staircase to make this cottage the best of all worlds. And wherever possible every material is reused/recycled/natural. Even the old staircase timber was reused as window boards etc. You might have noticed by now we really like it...

The beautiful facade is centred on a pretty front door. Either side there are lovely border plants behind the low stone front wall, flanking a couple of steps gently leading to the entrance. Once inside, you would struggle not to smile at such an inviting living room. The proud stone fireplace welcomes you with its cozy wood burner, flanked by wonderful lime-washed stone walls that have a patina redolent of the age and history. These alcoves could lend themselves well to a raft of store shelves, cabinets and the like, if desired. A pretty window at the front offers a fine view to watch the world roll slowly by, with the original lintel above perfectly framing the aperture.





Heading next door, the kitchen offers more of the same. A pair of windows overlooking the lane bring in excellent light, set into delightful deep recesses of lime-washed stone. More oak lintels and another stone fireplace all reinforce the charm, and unusually the stove/burner is a coal burner that provides cheap and efficient heating, connected to a modern digitally controlled hot water system with immersion back up. The size of the room is surprising, so much so that a large table finds more than ample space yet leaves generous room for all manner of dressers, a large fridge, etc. And the kitchen units themselves are a classic and timeless design - cream doors contrasting gently with the thick and sturdy Iroko hardwood work tops.

It's rather lovely that while the staircase has been moved out of the sitting room to the rear of the kitchen, the rear window is retained, ensuring the evolution of the house remains part of the story. Beneath it, a doorway leads to an unusual but very valuable extra space. Originally "just" a store room, this has been re-roofed, re-glazed etc to provide a really useful and significant extra space. The door to the left accesses a small courtyard next to a side gate that leads to the lane, handy for bins etc. The room itself is used currently just for bicycle storage etc, with a handy cupboard in the corner. But it could become anything from a Wc to a utility room, home office or dog & boot room - whatever you wish. And you'll notice the right hand door leads to a covered staircase... More of this later...!

Upstairs the space is equally charming. The staircase change has enabled a change of layout from two to three bedrooms, making a much better use of the space. The oak treads are flanked by elegant white-painted spindles, rising to a pleasant landing that serves all rooms. Take a left and the first of the bedrooms is a pretty room with the exposed stone of a chimney breast rising from below peeking through the corner. It's currently used as a generous single, but has the proportions to work as a sensible double room if desired. And the window is set high to the rear with a deep sill/seat. Those using it as a seat (children will LOVE this!) will be rewarded with a gorgeous view of the neighbour's gardens behind.

Next door, a slightly larger bedroom is currently used as a mix of home working space and bedroom, a combined use it's ideal for. The attention to detail in here is especially rewarding - the same chimney breast of next door creates an alcove fitted with shelves. And a timber window seat covers a shoe store. The view of the lane to the front from here is particularly peaceful. And at the opposite end of the landing, the best of the bedrooms is also the largest. Windows to three sides make sure this is the brightest and most positive of places to be! In addition, the dimensions naturally lend themselves to housing a large wardrobe, chest, and largest of double beds with ease. It's a fine room by most measures.

Serving all the rooms, the bathroom is elegant and well appointed. A white suite includes a sink atop a vanity unit, a bath with power shower over, plus an airing cupboard that provides excellent storage today but could be removed if desired to make the bathroom larger. NB on the landing you will notice a rather beautifully-made timber loft hatch. This leads up to a sizeable loft space complete with a boarded floor for easy storage. It is above head height at the peak hence is much easier to use than many.

We previously alluded to a further stairs running to the right from the utility. This is the access to the garden! Hand-made timber steps run behind the house, fully covered by a roof, to reach the garden which, due to the slope of the geography, sits at second floor level. The first few steps also cover a very clever coal store, and they are hinged to fold upwards for easy access. Head past a deep shelf which runs the full width, offering yet more storage, and at the top a door opens to a path that curves round, reaching the first of several lawned areas. The vendor has lavished real care and love on making this a fabulous and peaceful space that's open and welcoming. Initially, several walled beds host a wide variety of pretty plants, in addition to which there is a pond.

Half a dozen shallow steps lead up to the larger part of the garden. This is clearly a









spot that's well used. To the left a seating area also currently hosts a rather sophisticated barbecue (not included). To the right the timber-framed glass house is a rather upmarket greenhouse. Next to it, a timber workshop has been built with windows across the side and rear, and inside the work benches and mains power demonstrate this is a serious work space. In addition, it has a "living" roof, containing some lovely herbs and mosses that encourage bird and insect life while also insulating the workshop. It's a wonderful mix of industry and innovation, with the view behind over fields uninterrupted for as far as the eye can see.

Mains water, electricity, solid fuel CH  
Cherwell Council  
Council tax band D  
£2,281-32 p.a. 2024/25  
Freehold

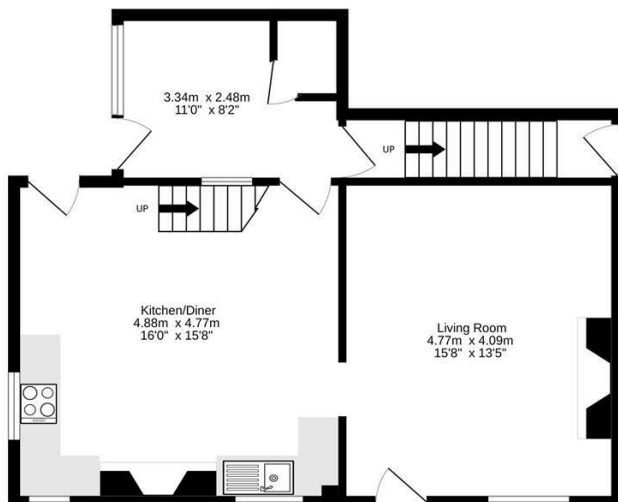




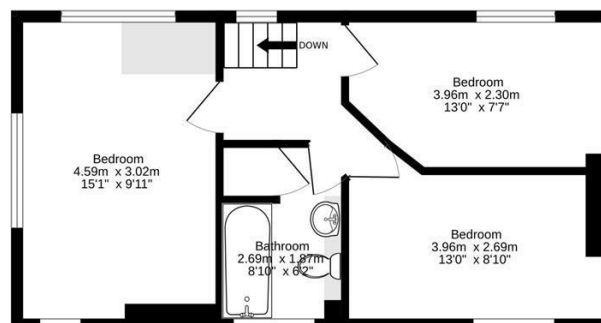
Material Information QR code:



**Ground Floor**  
53.3 sq.m. (574 sq.ft.) approx.



**1st Floor**  
39.6 sq.m. (426 sq.ft.) approx.



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**TOTAL FLOOR AREA : 92.9 sq.m. (1000 sq.ft.) approx.**

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### Energy Efficiency Rating

	Current	Potential
Very energy efficient - lower running costs		
(92 plus) <b>A</b>		<b>85</b>
(81-91) <b>B</b>		
(69-80) <b>C</b>		
(55-68) <b>D</b>	<b>57</b>	
(39-54) <b>E</b>		
(21-38) <b>F</b>		
(1-20) <b>G</b>		
Not energy efficient - higher running costs		
<b>England &amp; Wales</b>	EU Directive 2002/91/EC	

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