



# Former Padworth College, Padworth House, Sopers Lane, Padworth, Reading **RG7**

A substantial Georgian listed mansion and extensive further accommodation,  
for sale freehold with vacant possession.



# The opportunity.

## Former Padworth College, Padworth House, Sopers Lane, Padworth, Reading RG7 4NR

**A fine Grade II\* listed mansion principally dating from the Georgian era, enjoying stunning far reaching views across the West Berkshire landscape.**

- For sale with vacant possession on completion
- Buildings in all: 51,680 sq ft (4801.2 sq m)
- Gardens and grounds approx. 11.04 acres (4.46 hectares)
- Potential for continued use as a school (boarding), or alternative uses such as day school, residential, private family home, senior living, or hotel/hospitality, subject to all the necessary consents
- Excellent location – convenient for M4 (Junction 12) 6 miles, Reading 9 miles (with fast trains to London Paddington (approx. 29 mins) and Heathrow (approx. 40 mins by car)

# Background

Padworth College was established in 1963 by an Oxford University professor, Peter Fison who sought to bring international tutorial teaching methods to school level education. Originally a sixth form school for girls it moved to co-educational education in 2005 and operated as a small sixth form international boarding college offering a personalised education. It became part of Inspiring Futures Education in 2018 and celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2023. Sadly in 2025 a decision was made to close the school.

## Overview of property

The property has at its focal point the Grade II\* listed Georgian mansion which is approached along a tree lined drive passing a large pond. It is located just south of Padworth village and approximately 1.5 miles off the A4 (Bath Road) road linking Reading with Newbury. Lying approximately 9 miles to the south west of Reading, the property has over the years been converted to a college, extended and adapted to suit, plus a number of extension buildings of varying ages, including student boarding accommodation and the teaching building. Other on site facilities include tennis courts and an outdoor heated swimming pool. The grounds include formal lawns, as well as informal areas with a small lake and woodland which all create a wonderful rural feel, but yet it is not too distant from excellent transport links.







## History

The earliest recorded reference to Padworth is in the Domesday Book of 1086, where it is listed as land held by William de Eu. The house likely occupies the site of the old manor house of the Coudray family, who were lords of the manor from the early 13th century. The oldest part of the existing house is the eastern wing, which features internal heavy oak timbers in a style consistent with late 15th century construction.

The Coudray estate passed through several hands before being sold in 1655 and following this Thomas Brightwell,

a London merchant and Governor of St. Thomas' Hospital, made significant improvements to the house. The house changed hands again and then in 1769, under the supervision of John Hobcroft was largely rebuilt in a Georgian style which included the elegant entrance hall, with plasterwork by Joseph Rose in the style of the Adam brothers, which remains a key architectural feature.

In 1922, the estate featured in an article in Country Life magazine and the estate was sold in 1933 and then again in 1944, when it was broken into smaller parcels of land. It remained in private hands until 1963, when it was leased to establish Padworth College.



# Architecture

Padworth House, is a fine Grade II\* listed building, built in the mid-18th century and incorporates elements of an earlier 17th-century structure, designed by John Hobcraft. The exterior features a grand three-bay projecting pediment that is flanked by two wings. The accommodation is arranged principally over three floors, and externally has stucco elevations under a hipped slate roof and sash windows. It features many attractive period features including moulded architraves and cornices with Doric and fluted columns and a pediment over the porch entrance to the north. The grandeur of the exterior contributes significantly to the building's aesthetic and historical value.

Internally, much of the original layout has been preserved with a very attractive double-height entrance hall with vaulted ceilings and decorative plasterwork, elsewhere the house retains original features, including decorative plasterwork, fireplaces and cabinetry, reflecting the formal Georgian design. The first floor maintains its original plan whilst the second floor has been altered for modern use.

Outbuildings include a former greenhouse and an accommodation block. The former stable blocks retain much of the original layout, including stable-style doors, red brickwork and timber beams, and both have been adapted for modern school use as accommodation and teaching.

The setting of Padworth House is integral to its historical significance. The house is surrounded by formal lawned areas and agricultural fields, maintaining much of its original design and enhancing the overall significance of the building.

Adjacent is the Grade I listed St John the Baptist Church, which is in separate ownership, and thus within the local community are two buildings of considerable historic and architectural significance.



# Location

Padworth College is located within the Kennet Valley, in the hamlet of Padworth and within West Berkshire but close to the Berkshire/Hampshire borders, approximately 50 miles west of London.

It enjoys beautiful far reaching views across the Kennet Valley and surrounding countryside within a delightful rural setting but with the benefit of excellent commuter links. Local amenities can be found in the neighbouring villages of Theale, Tadley, Burghfield Common, Mortimer and Aldermaston (all less than 4 miles).

The nearest local mainline train stations Aldermaston Wharf and Theale serving Reading and London Paddington in under an hour. Reading station (9 miles) offers fast commuter services to London Paddington in under half an hour, plus more extensive amenities

including High Street shopping and department stores, sporting and leisure facilities and larger supermarkets. Additionally, trains and shopping facilities can be found in Newbury (11 miles), and Basingstoke (12 miles) also provides a train service to London Waterloo. The M4 (6.3 miles to Junction 12 ) and M3 can be easily accessed for travel towards London and its airports, or to the West Country or the south coast.

The location offers opportunities for country pursuits, including cycling, horse-riding and scenic walks on Padworth Common's nature reserve and along the Kennet & Avon Canal.

The area is well served with highly regarded schools including local state primary and nursery schools, and independent schools such as Bradfield College, Pangbourne College, Brockhurst & Marlston, Elstree and Downe House.



## Road:

The property is situated off Sopers Lane/Rag Hill and is about 2 miles from the A4 (Bath Road) which leads to the M4 (Reading West junction 12) that is approximately 6 miles distant. The M4 gives access to the M25 and its further links to the national motorway network, Heathrow airport (approx. 37 miles) and London (approx. 49 miles) the east and Wales to the west.



## Rail:

The nearest train stations are Aldermaston Wharf and Theale (both approx. 6 miles) which directly link to Reading, where services to London (28 minutes) and multiple other destinations.



## Air:

Heathrow Airport is the closest international airport. It provides access to 230 destinations in 70 countries. It is approximately 38 miles to the east of the site.





## Accommodation

The College estate comprises a cluster of buildings centred on the Grade II\* listed Padworth House, most recently used as an international boarding college for students aged 14-18 years.

Buildings on the site range from single to four stories with the main house extending to four stories including basement. The accommodation is arranged to suit the teaching and administration/supporting functions of the College along with staff accommodation.

### Padworth House

**Approx 21,655 sq ft (2,011.8 sq m) GIA**

The Grade II\* listed house is entered from the south via the large and elegant reception hall, with its open staircase and ornate plasterwork, and from here access is given to the main rooms within Padworth House which are arranged over three principal floors (plus basement). The original principal reception rooms in this part of the house are used for teaching, reception and administration activities and enjoy the expansive views across the surrounding countryside.

The west wing contains two dining rooms again in original reception rooms and a further teaching room on the ground floor. The first floor of this wing has been converted to provide self-contained accommodation for the college Principal and his family, as an apartment comprising 4 rooms. The east wing ground floor provides offices for the college administration staff. Above this there are a further teaching room and staff offices. Rooms on the second floor of the house have been sensitively refurbished for further teaching accommodation.

## Boarding and teaching accommodation

**Approx 26,059 sq ft (2,420.9 sq m) GIA**

Forming part of the curtilage listing the original stable buildings along with further additions are located to the east of the house and provide extensive accommodation over a ground and two upper floors.

**Teaching wing:** The space here is arranged over two floors and provides a range of classrooms, smaller teaching and tutorial spaces along with several art and science labs and science lab/prep rooms.

**Granary, Ritz and Fisons:** The boarding accommodation is provided in three linked wings over three floors. The bedrooms are arranged along seven separate corridors and provide 80+ rooms each with a wash basin. Each corridor is served by an ablutions block with showers and WCs, along with further provision in this regard at intervals along the corridors. In addition, there are several self contained staff flats.

## Outbuildings

**Approx 3,967 sq ft (368.5 sq m) GIA**

The existing conservatory adjacent to the granary provides a gym for students, with the Granary providing staff accommodation.

## Gardens and grounds

The College is sited in mature grounds with open lawns to the north of the main house, which can be accessed via French windows down to the terraced lawns. There are clusters of woodland and a large pond to the south-east of the main building.

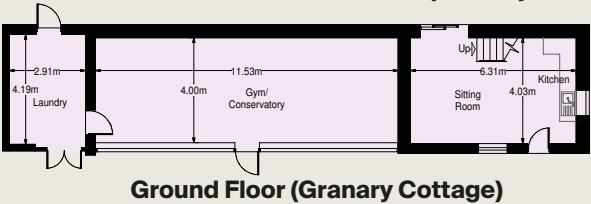
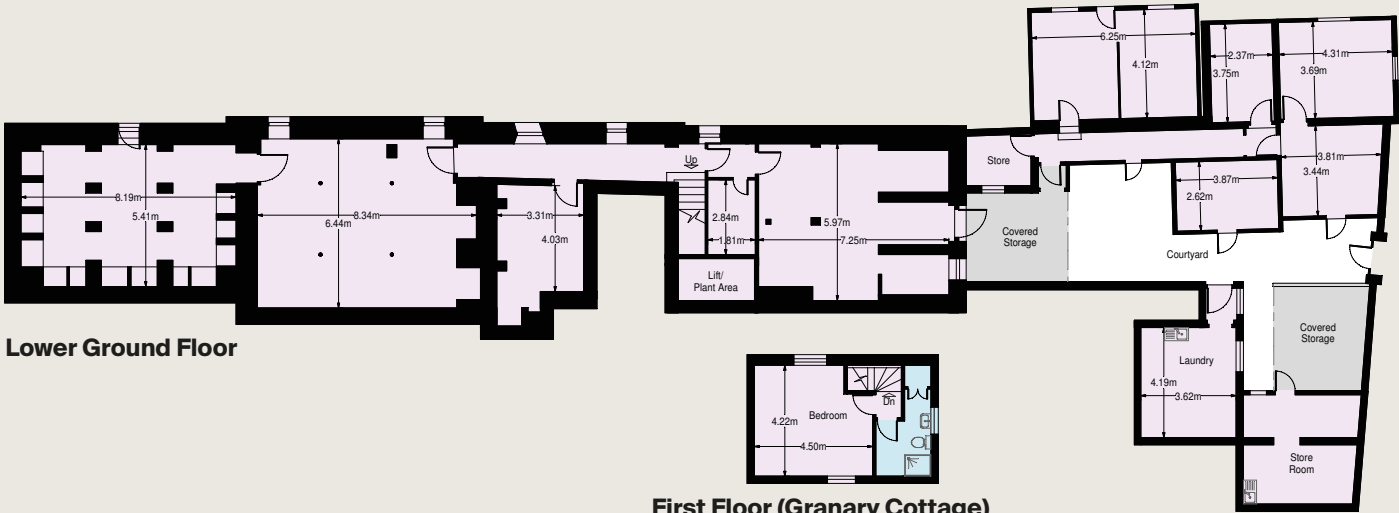
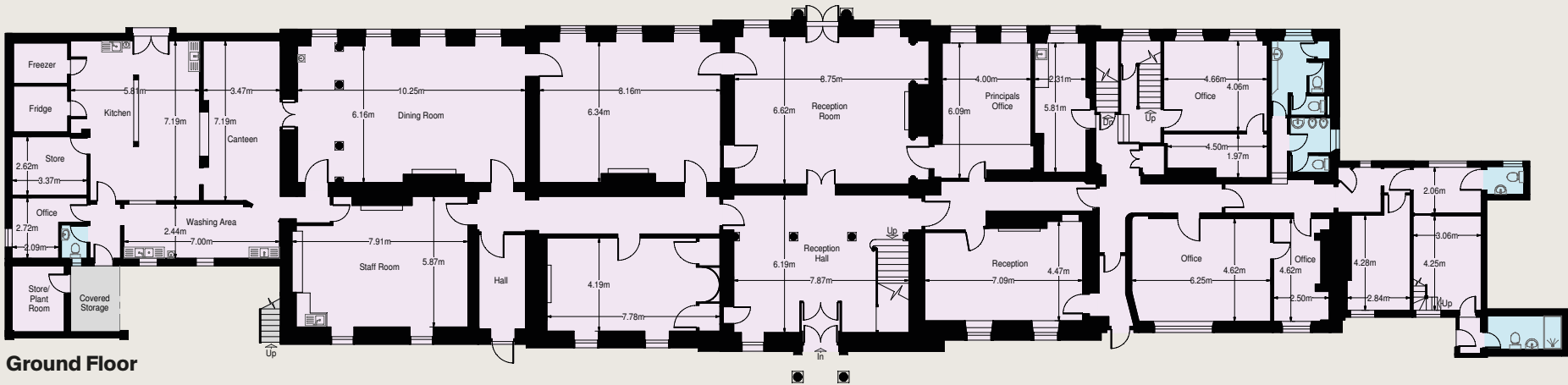
The gardens are partly bounded by a garden wall to the west and the main area of parking is at the front of the house. There is an outdoor heated swimming pool to the east near to the stable block and a multi use games area off the main drive.



# Floorplans and floor areas



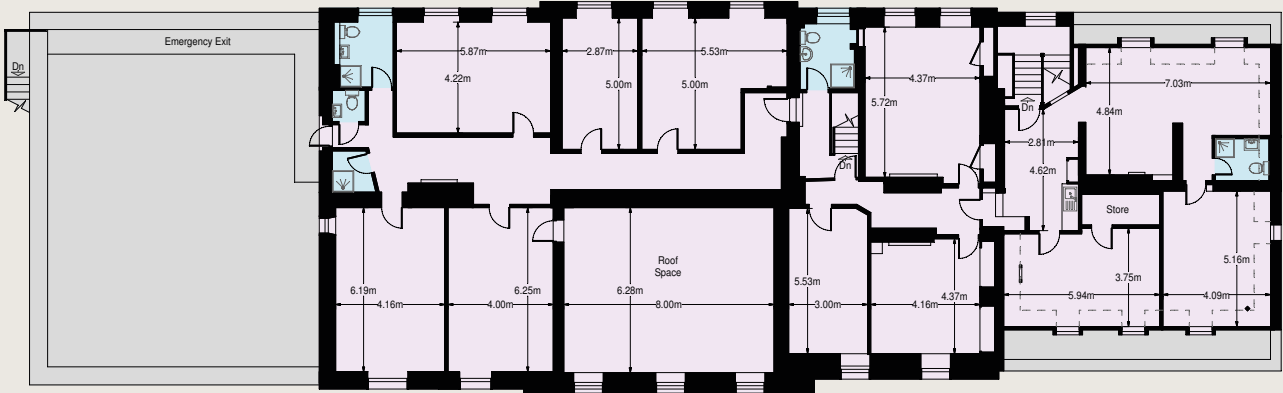
## Main house, granary cottage and store rooms



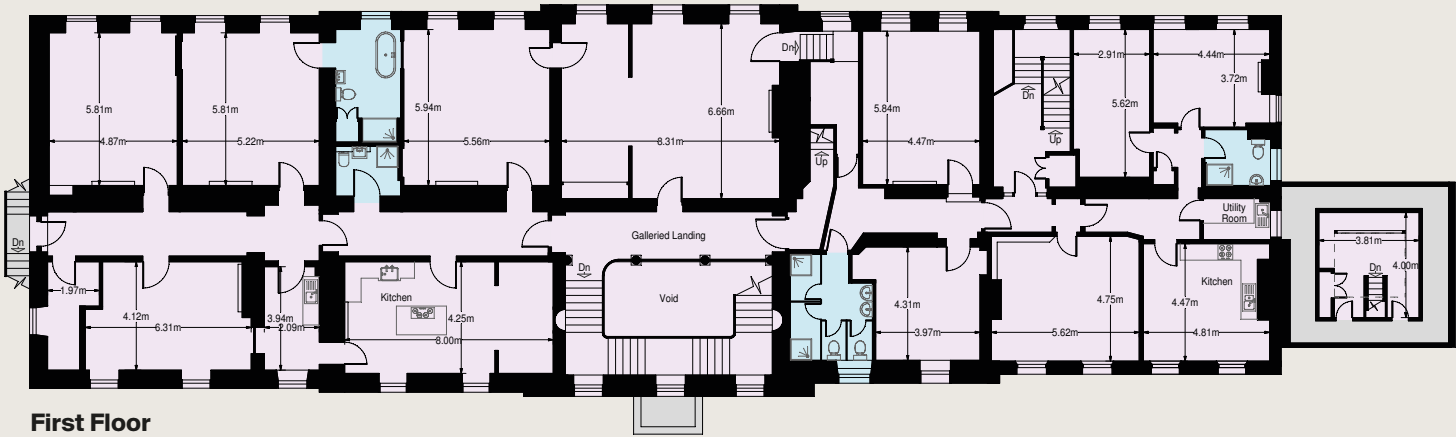
A summary of the GIA (Gross internal area) is provided below a full schedule is available on a floor by floor and building by building basis.



| Summary total                                                                | sq m GIA       | sq ft GIA     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| <b>Main house:</b> Includes reduced height area of 24.8 sq m / 267 sq ft)    | 2,011.8        | 21,655        |
| <b>Star building:</b> Includes reduced height area of 54.9 sq m / 591 sq ft) | 2,420.9        | 26,059        |
| <b>Additional buildings:</b> Excludes covered storage areas                  | 368.5          | 3,967         |
| <b>Grand total</b>                                                           | <b>4,801.2</b> | <b>51,680</b> |



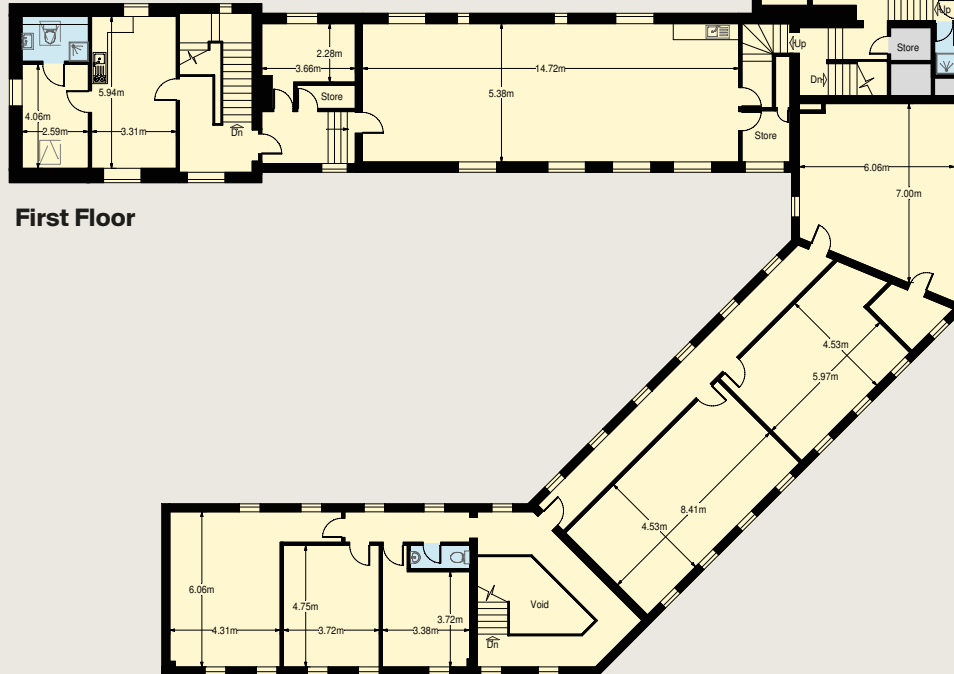
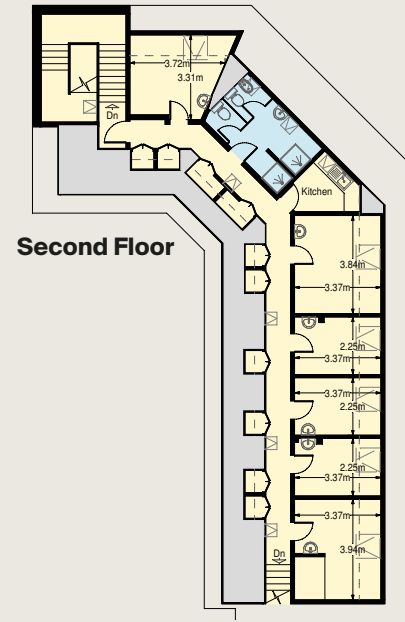
Second Floor



First Floor

## Boarding and teaching





## Planning and heritage

The property has been used as a mixed day and boarding school. The established use of the site is considered to comprise Class C2 (residential institutions) of the Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended).

Padworth House, was first included in the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest at Grade II\* on 25th October 1951 (NHLE: 1117314). There are structures to the east of the main building.

Our client has commissioned both a planning and heritage appraisals on the property, which are available on a non-reliance basis on request.



## Title and tenure

The property is held freehold and title to the property is registered at HM Land Registry under title number BK480656. The area of land for sale is outlined in red on the site plan. Vacant possession available on completion.

A report on title is available.

## Rights of way

The property is sold subject to any existing rights of way and easements that benefit and burden the property. The Walled Garden (neighbouring house) has a right of access over the drive. There is a public right of way (footpath) that passes up from the north east corner on the east side, then alongside the small lake and across to the adjoining church.



## Site plan



## Energy performance asset rating

The full EPC register is available to download from the dataroom.

- Ritz, Granary, Fisons and Stables; EPC Rating: D
- Main house: D

## Business rates

Current rateable value £58,500 (1st April 2023)

Private School and College.

This is the rateable value for the property and not what is paid in business rates. Rates paid is c. £32,000.

## Council tax

There are 4 accommodations with council tax bands of A, A, D & H, which total c. £10,000 for the 25/26 fiscal year.

## Services

- Mains water
- Private drainage
- LPG/Oil for heating and hot water

It is the responsibility of the Purchaser to ensure that services are available and adequate for their proposed use.

## Statutory authority

West Berkshire Council

<https://www.westberks.gov.uk>

## Viewings

Strictly through prior appointment and subject to local restrictions in place at the time. Prospective purchasers should be aware that inspections are made entirely at their own risk and no liability is accepted by the vendor or their agent.

## VAT

The property has not been elected for VAT.

## Fixtures and fittings

Please refer to the dataroom for the extent of fixtures and fittings included in the sale or available separately. Some fittings and contents may be available for sale separately or included. The extent of contents may have altered since the images were taken and at the time of any inspection.

## Method of sale

The property is offered for sale by private treaty whilst reserving the right to proceed to an informal tender. The informal tender date is available from Knight Frank.

Interested parties should complete the bid form on the datasite and submit this to Knight Frank.

## Knight Frank Debt Advisory

The Knight Frank Debt Advisory team provides a value-add service to those considering obtaining real estate finance for developments or acquisitions. The team partners with borrowers throughout the financing process to make it simpler and faster, and to ensure that they finish with optimal terms.

For further information, please contact Lisa Attenborough of the Knight Frank Debt advisory team on [lisa.attenborough@knightfrankfinance.com](mailto:lisa.attenborough@knightfrankfinance.com) 020 3909 6846.

## Further information

Further information including legal documents including report on title, various surveys, EPC and floorplans along with the bid form are available on our dedicated website. Please email [florrie.spencer@knightfrank.com](mailto:florrie.spencer@knightfrank.com) for access. Otherwise please contact Emma Cleugh at [emma.cleugh@knightfrank.com](mailto:emma.cleugh@knightfrank.com) +44 (0) 207 861 5427 or +44 (0) 7778 463958 to discuss further.

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**Fixtures and fittings:** A list of the fitted carpets, curtains, light fittings and other items fixed to the property which are included in the sale (or may be available by separate negotiation) will be provided by the Seller's Solicitors.

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Particulars dated May 2025. Photos dated March 2025

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