

Bryan Bishop
and partners

Hill Farm Lane

Ayot St. Lawrence, AL6 9BW



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Summary:

Bryan Bishop and Partners are delighted to bring to the market this absolutely gorgeous Grade II listed period property set within four acres of grounds that offer a perfectly blended mix of beautifully landscaped formal gardens and a large enclosed paddock complete with a three stall stable block. Do not be misled by the name of the house - this is not a cottage - it is a stunning and substantial country house offering five double bedrooms and three bathrooms arranged over four floors, along with a charming wine cellar/bar area, a superb detached pavillion and a two double bedroom annexe built around and above the detached double garage. Originally constructed as a timber framed dwelling in the 17th century and subsequently recased in traditional red brick in the 18th century, this charming property has been the beneficiary of the current owners unwavering desire to meticulously and painstakingly maintain, refurbish and improve the house and grounds, resulting in a luxurious and generously appointed family home that is absolutely fit for purpose during day to day modern family life, yet also celebrities its heritage through a wealth of authentic features that have been so carefully retained and preserved for future generations. There are very few properties that offer such a wonderful amalgam of traditional surroundings combined with a premium modern specification, with flexible and adaptable accommodation that provides ample independent space for staff or guests, along with a detached garden pavilion presenting an elegant and charming entertaining space without equal. Add to this the rural yet convenient location and the grounds and facilities that are so ideally suited to equestrian use and it is clear to see what a rare and highly desirable property this is.

Accommodation:

A traditional solid oak front door, shaped within an ornate gothic arch entrance, welcomes you into an entrance lobby that then opens through a decorative leaded glass panelled door into the main sitting room.

The sitting room immediately gives you a sense of what is to come throughout this fabulous house, with a wealth of exposed beams, arched windows and doors and an enduring aura of period charm. A large space on its own, yet still abundantly lit by windows arranged across two separate aspects, and like the rest of the house, benefiting from the high ceilings that clearly show it was built as a dwelling for someone of good standing in the community. At one end is an impressive brick built inglenook that occupies one side of the very large chimney stack, built up through the central ridge with four joined hexagonal shafts, and houses a wonderful cast iron grate set beneath a blackened copper hood with a lovely oak bressumer beam running across the front. The chimney also acts as a useful divider, allowing a free flow around both sides whilst also neatly delineating the sitting room from the dining room beyond.













The dining room is another room full of character with exposed beams and a very large open fireplace set into the central exposed brick chimney. Another light, bright room with a large front facing window and glazed french doors opening into the gardens, the dining room is endowed with more than enough space for a substantial dining table and chairs as well as other occasional furniture and features a well placed guest cloakroom and a charming pair of wrought iron gates fitted into the gothic arched doorway that lead down into the cellar.

The cellar makes wonderful use of the structural timbers and brick pillars to create an atmospheric as well as practical space to keep your wine collection in great condition, as well as a very cool bar area in which to sample the vintage before making your final dinner selection!

At the centre of the house, positioned perfectly between the sitting room, dining room and living room, are the kitchen and breakfast room, connected to each other by an open archway and both usefully connected separately out into the gardens on either side of the house. The kitchen is a warm and homely space with a comprehensive array of bespoke built wall and floor mounted cabinets fitted around the perimeter offering more than ample storage along with generous food preparation worktop space that is further boosted by a neat breakfast bar. The adjoining breakfast room boasts a curated selection of fitted cabinets that match the style and smart contrasting colours used in the main kitchen, as well as a lovely four oven AGA. Within the cabinets of the kitchen and breakfast room is a complete collection of integrated appliances, all from premium branded manufacturers such as Miele and Wolf. These two rooms work incredibly well together to offer all the facilities and space you will ever need yet maintain an intimacy and ergonomic efficiency often absent in very large open plan arrangements.

From the breakfast room a beautiful oak beam frames the open entrance up a delightful curved step into the living room. The living room runs the full width of the house, extending to nearly thirty-nine feet in length. No fewer than four sets of french doors connect the room seamlessly out into the garden, whilst also allowing the light to flood in unhindered, easily filling the enchanting open pitched ceiling. Obviously the room is large enough to be designed and furnished however you see fit, and is absolutely full to overflowing with authentic period features. The outside wall has a huge inglenook with recessed log stores either side and a large log burner at the centre set on a block paved hearth. Further along the room is an original well shaft, now safely and decoratively capped by an exquisitely crafted circular cast iron and glass floor panel allowing a clear view into the creatively lit interior. To one end is a charming mezzanine floor, accessed by a set of craftsman built bespoke wooden steps to create what is very probably the coolest home office in the whole county. This room typifies the essence of this incredible property. Certainly it is large, but it is so much more than that, it is also warm and welcoming and homely.



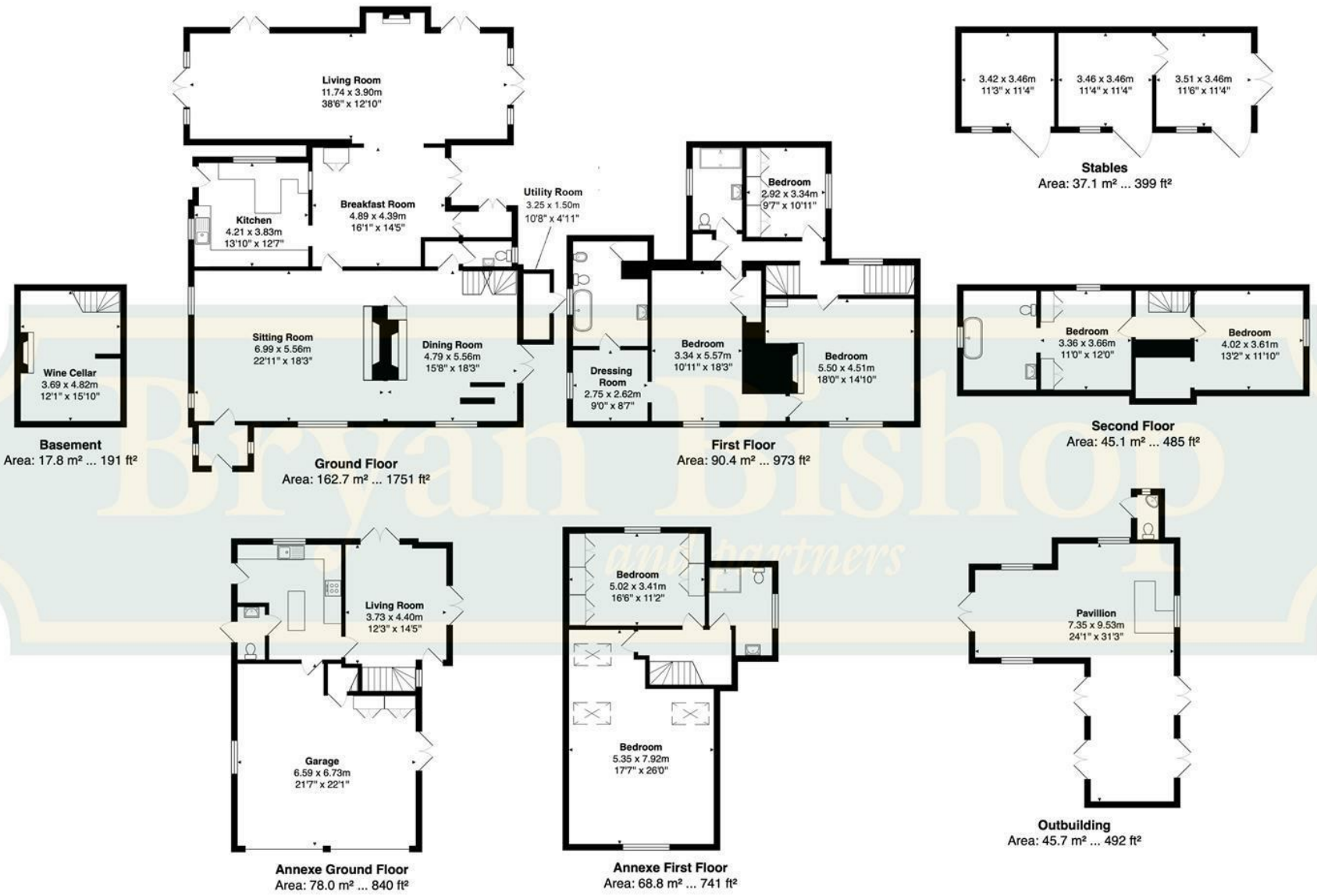


Set within the grounds, within a short stroll across the patio, is the superb pavilion, a substantial 'L' shaped barn style building that now offers a wonderful combined entertaining space incorporating a large dining hall, bar area and multiple spaces that are just perfect for casual seating. Designed and constructed as a sympathetic modern iteration of the original house, it is blessed with an immaculate display of craftsmanship that imbues the space with an absolutely authentic charm.The soaring open ceilings help to bounce the light into every corner, which considering there are four separate windows and five sets of french doors, creates what amounts to a multi-facetted orangery, exhibiting all of the benefits of a conservatory without any of the drawbacks. This is a wonderful facility to have, perfect for gathering friends and family together, daytime or evening, with a useful WC appended.

Up on the first floor of the main house are three of the bedrooms and the family shower room. All of the bedrooms are doubles, although the smallest room is currently fully fitted with wardrobes and used as a luxurious dressing room. The two main bedrooms both enjoy substantial open fireplaces set within dramatic exposed brick chimney breasts that continues up through the centre of the house from the sitting room and dining room below, whilst one of the bedrooms boasts a walk-in dressing room that leads on into a delightful en suite bathroom complete with a free standing claw foot bath.

The second floor houses two further bedrooms, both of which are generous doubles and are blessed with open pitch ceilings that show off the delightful exposed beams that form the roof. One of the bedrooms has expertly crafted fitted wardrobes either side of a gothic arch that opens into a large and well appointed en suite bathroom, again blessed with an elegant claw foot bath.

The annexe is a separate two bedroom residence arranged over two floors that forms part of the garage block that sits adjacent to the front of the house. It has been designed and constructed with an incredible eye for detail that gives it a fully complementary style with carefully selected materials that allow it to merge effortlessly into the surroundings, completely coordinating with the main house. There is a separate entrance into a good sized living room which opens into a large fully fitted kitchen and a useful ground floor guest cloakroom. On the first floor are two large bedrooms, one of which extends to twenty-six feet in length and could easily be repurposed as a living/dining room. One of the bedrooms benefits from multiple fitted wardrobes, and there is a smart shower room also on the first floor.



Total Area: 545.6 m² ... 5872 ft²

























Exterior:

There is secure gated access in from the quiet country lane on which the property is placed, which opens into a large parking area that stretches across from the front of the house to the double garage, giving ample parking and turning space for family and guests alike. The view of the house and gardens as you approach is quite simply breathtaking. Beautifully designed, landscaped and immaculately maintained, the gardens are a delight, with an incredible variety of planting creatively curated into an absolute feast of colour and shape, further elevated by the most stunning collection of topiary bushes and hedges in a magnificent display of the art. The driveway blends into a paved area that runs right around the house and annexe, giving multiple opportunities for outdoor casual seating and dining furniture on the extensive patio to the rear. Beyond an ornamental pond and fountain a short flight of paved steps joins with another set of steps further along to lead onto the lawn, which is also surrounded by the most beautifully created and managed cornucopia of shrubs, bushes, specimen trees and decorative hedges that stretch around the full boundary of the formal gardens, passing the pavilion on the way which is blessed with its own generous separate patio area. The formal grounds run to approximately one acre, leaving around three acres of open paddock, with a useful easy connection from the front garden. To the rear of the paddock is a stable block, in immaculate condition just like every other aspect of this stunning property, with three stables.

Location:

This exquisite property enjoys a fabulous location, being in a quiet rural setting within the highly desirable village of Ayot St, Lawrence, yet within easy reach of the vibrant villages of Welwyn, Wheathampstead and Codicote and a short drive away from the A1(M) that provides excellent links both north and south and a fast connection to the M1 and M25. Welwyn North station hosts regular fast services into central London, making this an easy commute, as well as regular services northbound as far afield as Edinburgh.









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