



# Landmark Grade II listed converted windmill

**The Windmill, Rays Hill, Braziers End, Cholesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP5 2UJ**

Guide £1,650,000 Freehold





Reception hall • inner hall • cloakroom • drawing room  
 • sitting room • dining room • kitchen/breakfast room  
 • utility room • 4 bedrooms • study/bedroom 5 • gardens  
 • about 0.3 acre

The Windmill is a stunning Grade II listed former working windmill that together with an adjoining cottage forms a wonderful home with a wealth of charm and character.

### History

A Windmill was first located on or near the site during the 17th and 18th centuries according to contemporary maps. In 1863 a smock mill was constructed by the Norwich Wind and Steam Company. Unfortunately for a number of reasons the smock mill was not profitable and it was demolished in 1883.

A new mill was built on the same site in that same year. This was a masonry tower mill thought to be one of the last of its kind built in England. It was built by Hillsdons of Tring at a cost of £300. The following year the tall chimney associated with the steam mill was taken down, however the original flywheel for the steam engine has been retained in the dining room.

Daniel Dwight is recorded as the first miller of the newly built tower mill, followed by Thomas Robinson who was experienced in steam powered mills, taking over in 1891. He continued to be the miller until it ceased operation in 1912 and was converted along with the mill house into a private residence the following year.

The first resident was Gilbert Cannan and his new wife Mary (née Ansell), who had previously been married to JM

Barrie, the creator of Peter Pan.

The Cannans invited their friends and acquaintances, many of whom were associated with two artists' groups, the Bloomsbury Group, and the lesser well known London Group, which were both prominent around the time of the First World War. Reputed visitors to the mill included DH Lawrence, Katherine Mansfield, and the painter Mark Gertler.

Gertler painted a famous picture of the mill called 'Gilbert Cannan at his Mill' now on show in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. The picture depicts Cannan outside the Mill with his two dogs, one believed to be the dog that previously belonged to the Barries, and was the original inspiration for Nana in the book Peter Pan.

The Cannans left the mill in 1916 and it was rented by the celebrated American actress of the day, Doris Keane, who used it as a weekend retreat whilst appearing in London theatre productions. In the 1930's the mill was used as an art studio and for classes by the artist Bernard Adams.

A more recent resident was Sir David Hatch, director of BBC Radio, a former member of the Cambridge Footlights alongside John Cleese, Tim Brook-Taylor and Graham Chapman. Many show business parties were held at the windmill with celebrity guests attending.



## Description

The current owners restored the cap and installed new sails and fantail using materials and a design copying the Victorian originals, with the work carried out by millwright Paul Kemp.

The fantail is fully working with the gearing installed so the cap can automatically rotate so the sails face the wind and turn. However the sails and fantail are kept chained.

The main entrance door is at the base of the tower with a wonderful first impression of the circular reception hall which leads into the inner hall of the cottage with the two more formal, bright and spacious, reception rooms each side. The sitting room has a wood burning stove. A spiral staircase leads to the lower ground floor and the dining room with the original feature flywheel on display, and the family sized kitchen/breakfast room which includes an Aga and French doors opening on to the front terrace.

On the first floor there are three more conventional bedrooms and two bathrooms, one en suite to the main bedroom plus a beautiful circular fourth with an en suite shower room, ideal for when guests visit. A further staircase from here leads to the fifth bedroom which has far reaching views and provides an ideal study for home working. A ladder from here leads to the cap and workings.

An additional feature is the delightful 'country garden' with lovely views over the neighbouring fields and countryside beyond. There are areas of lawn with well stocked

beds and borders with an idyllic spot in one corner for relaxation. There are two summerhouses, a shed and a workshop.

## Situation

Braziers End is a hamlet always closely associated with Cholesbury, Anglo Saxon in origin and located in Buckinghamshire on the border with Hertfordshire. The common provides a picturesque rural setting with many miles of footpaths and bridleways throughout the glorious Chiltern countryside designated an 'area of outstanding natural beauty'. The Full Moon public house and restaurant is also close by.

Larger towns such as Chesham (Metropolitan Line) about 4 miles, Amersham (Metropolitan/Chiltern Line) about 6 miles and Berkhamsted (Main Line) about 5 miles all providing multiple shopping facilities and amenities together with stations for the London commuter.

## Tenure

Freehold

## Council Tax

Band = G

## Viewing

Strictly by appointment with Savills





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**Approximate Gross Internal Area**

**Lower Ground Floor** 62.0 sq m / 667 sq ft

**Ground Floor** 66.0 sq m / 710 sq ft **First Floor** 69.0 sq m / 743 sq ft

**Second Floor** 9.0 sq m / 97 sq ft **Total** 206.0 sq m / 2,217 sq ft



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This plan is for layout guidance only. Not drawn to scale unless stated. Windows and door openings are approximate. Whilst every care is taken in the preparation of this plan, please check all dimensions, shapes and compass bearings before making any decisions reliant upon them.

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