

Eshott Hall up for sale

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The family home of a prominent Northumberland businessmen whose companies are in the hands of administrators has been put up for sale for £3m.

Buyers are being sought for opulent Eshott Hall near Felton, Northumberland - the home of farmer, landowner and property developer Ho Sanderson, 60, and his wife Margaret.



The sale of the imposing country mansion, which boasts 11 bedrooms and six reception rooms, is being handled by estate agents George F White.

It has gone on the market less than two months after the announcement that Mr Sanderson's portfolio of companies - including Eshott Hall Estate Ltd - had been placed in the hands of administrators, after becoming insolvent.

Eshott Hall, which has a guide price of £3m, is described as an historic country home set in 35 acres of 'exquisite' gardens and grounds.

Prospective buyers are being offered a 'rare opportunity to own one of Northumberland's finest country homes', and the sale includes three holiday cottages and two self-contained apartments. It has been put up for sale by the administrators, Newcastle accountants Grant Thornton.

Designed and built between 1588 and 1600, Eshott Hall and its surrounding estate were bought in 1877 by Emerson Bainbridge, founder of the famous Newcastle department store who later enlarged and improved the building.

In 1997 the hall was restored by Mr Sanderson and his family, and has been developed as a luxury boutique hotel and a venue for private parties, weddings and conferences.

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Yesterday Hugh Fell, managing partner with George F White, said Mr Sanderson and his family are running the Eshott Hall business on behalf of the administrator, and would continue to do so until a buyer is found. They would then move out of the hall.

"Eshott Hall would make a fantastic private home, or an opportunity for someone to continue running a business while living there."

Mr Sanderson is currently recovering from a shooting incident in March, when he apparently tripped while out walking in the fields near Eshott Hall and shot himself in the face and neck. He will need lengthy and extensive reconstructive surgery.

In July it was revealed that all of his companies had been placed into administration after they became insolvent. The move involved Eshott Hall Estate Ltd, Hartford Hall Estate Ltd, Hartfound Ltd, Filebase and some dormant companies.

The Filebase document storage business was immediately sold back to the family by Grant Thornton, and is being run by Mr Sanderson's sons Mark and David.

Earlier this month it was revealed that Northumberland County Council had withdrawn legal proceedings against Mr and Mrs Sanderson, following the administration of Hartford Hall Estate Ltd. They had been charged with failing to comply with planning conditions imposed on the company's redevelopment of the former mansion and its woodland grounds near Bedlington.