

Sales Heat Up As The Priciest Piece Of Land In British History Welcomes First Residents



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Real Estate

I cover residential real estate, including buying, selling and trends.

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The cast-iron railings along the perimeter of the Chelsea Barracks site were built as part of the ... [\[+\]](#) JACK HOBHOUSE

The long and winding history of [Chelsea Barracks](#), the most anticipated and high-profile residential project in London, has reached a milestone with the recent welcoming of its first residents. On the site of a historic former military base in [Belgravia](#), one of the wealthiest districts in the world, the luxurious collection of apartments, townhouses and penthouses is designed around landscaped green spaces encompassing nearly 13 acres.

The original site was completed in 1861 after receiving the royal seal of approval from Queen Victoria. It housed active members of the British Royal Army until 2007, when the land was sold for \$1.3 billion to [Qatari Diar](#), the real estate investment arm of the Qatari Investment Authority, one of the largest sovereign wealth funds in the world. It was the most expensive real estate transaction in the United Kingdom's history.



The first furnished residence experiments with a color palette of various shades of blue. RAY
MAIN



Master bedroom RAY MAIN

The site’s design went through several twists and turns, facing near extinction before being brought back to life. [Prince Charles](#) was even involved at one point, objecting to a proposed modernist steel and glass design. For the final design, Qatari Diar Europe engaged a mix of London-based designers, architects and urban planners to create a sustainable residential environment that retains a strong sense of place and honors its heritage. The master planners for the project are Square & Partners, Sir Jeremy Dixon, Professor Edward Jones and landscape architect Kim Wilkie.

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Chelsea Barracks’ residential buildings take inspiration from the formal Georgian squares of Belgravia. The buildings are positioned around a series of landscaped public routes and spaces, ensuring that they are accessible to the local community and evolve as a natural addition to Belgravia.



Streamlined kitchen ALEXANDER JAMES



Business suite ALEXANDER JAMES

After 12 years of design and planning, the ambitious ultra-luxury development is welcoming residents into a recently completed section, which comprises three new London square city blocks showcasing 67 apartments and three penthouses. The first residents moved into Chelsea Barracks last fall, when phase one was completed.

As of December 2019, almost 80% of phase one units have been sold. The last six weeks of 2019 saw some of Chelsea Barracks' strongest sales with over \$58 million worth of sales happening in the fourth quarter of 2019.

While rooted in the heritage and context of the local area, the architecture of Chelsea Barracks is distinctly contemporary. Building facades are characterized by smooth and textured variations of Portland stone, fluted vertical columns, recessed bays and projecting balconies. Portland stone has been used extensively in major public buildings in London such as St. Paul's Cathedral and Buckingham Palace.



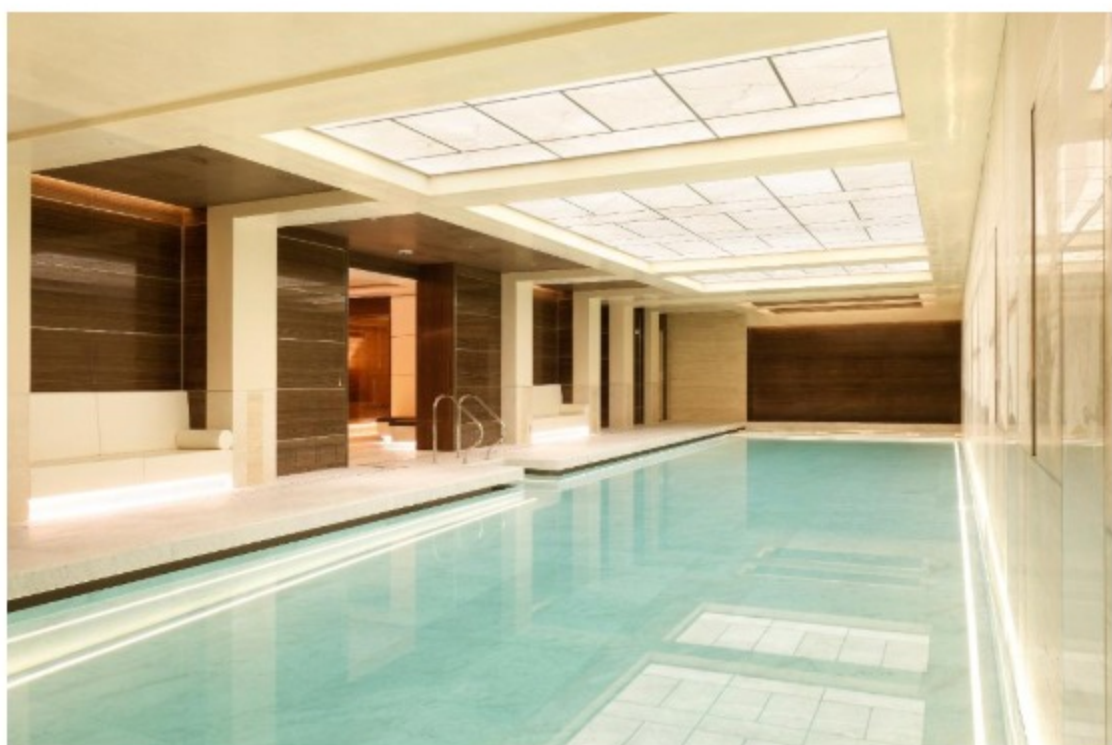
Residents lounge ALEXANDER JAMES



Cinema at Chelsea Barracks ALEXANDER JAMES

In addition to its mix of housing and gardens, Chelsea Barracks will showcase a wide array of amenities upon completion, including restaurants, shops and fitness amenities. The Garrison Club, which opened in November, is a state-of-the-art health club and spa. It features a 13,000-square-foot spa, a nearly 70-foot-long swimming pool, his and hers steam rooms and saunas, a gym, private training studio, beauty center, 16-seat movie theater, residents' lounge, full business suite, game rooms and underground parking garage.

A chapel dating back to 1851 is being restored and converted into an art gallery surrounded by a 300-foot vegetable garden with a historic brook that has been resurfaced after years of neglect. Over 40% (5 acres) of the project site has been set aside for public use, including seven traditional garden squares open year-round.



Spa retreat ALEXANDER JAMES



Billiards room ALEXANDER JAMES

The four-bedroom, four-bathroom model home was designed by [Elicyon](#), a London-based luxury interior design studio based in Kensington, London. The unit features eclectic furnishings that have been combined with textured materials, antiques and natural greenery to create a design that speaks to the history of Chelsea Barracks as a military site and reflects Belgravia’s heritage and botanical links.



Public square inspired by the traditional garden squares of Belgravia COURTESY OF M18 PUBLIC RELATIONS

Ceilings are over 9 feet, and striking English herringbone and marble flooring are featured throughout. Bespoke furniture pieces by [OCHRE](#), [Julian Chichester](#) and [Vincent Sheppard](#) elevate the decor.

The home’s subtle green color palette hints at the site’s military past with lighting inspired by 19th century British carriage lights. Elicyon’s design blends antique pieces with a clean, contemporary aesthetic to create a rich and very British home.

Chelsea Barracks is across the street from Royal Hospital Chelsea, a retirement and nursing home for retired soldiers of the British Army. Since 1913, the facility has hosted the prestigious Chelsea Flower Show, which is one of the area’s most eagerly anticipated horticultural events. Click [here](#) to watch a video of Chelsea Barracks.

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