

# es magazine

A full-page photograph of Helena Christensen. She is wearing a white, strapless, sequined bodice with a large, voluminous white feathered collar. Her hair is pulled back, and she has dramatic eye makeup. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is plain white.

30 July 2010

## The daring Dane

**Helena Christensen's  
underwear odyssey**

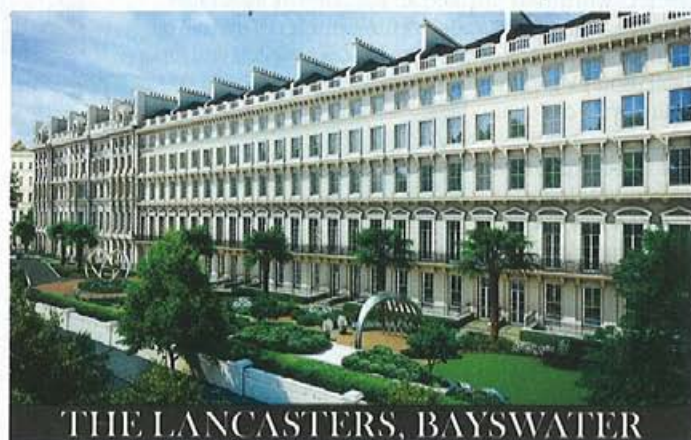
**PLUS**  
ONE HYDE PARK VS  
THE LANCASTERS

HORSING AROUND  
WITH ZARA PHILLIPS

# LIVING THE DREAM

Two new developments are pitching for billionaires' business. One Hyde Park offers metal walls and gym pods; The Lancasters serves up hand-painted wallpaper and landscaped gardens. So which will London's rich plump for?

**Hannah Nathanson** goes through the keyhole



**ONE HYDE PARK, KNIGHTSBRIDGE**

**THE LANCASTERS, BAYSWATER**

Candy & Candy brothers Nick and Christian (below left), the self-made property tycoons who manage some of London's most controversial sites including Chelsea Barracks, which is being co-developed by Christian Candy's CPC Group, are responsible for the management and interior design of the project. Candy collaborator Lord Rogers is the leading architect. The development is owned by Project Grande (Guernsey) Limited, a joint venture between the CPC Group and the Prime Minister of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al-Thani.

## WHO'S IN CHARGE?

Minerva, the development company behind The Odeon, Kensington, in collaboration with Northacre, which is responsible for more than £1.5 billion of Central London's finest new addresses including The Bromptons in Chelsea and Observatory Gardens in Kensington. The architects Nilsson (led by CEO Klas Nilsson, right) spent more than a year underpinning the original façade - which, at 124m, is the longest in Europe - with 500 tonnes of steel supports. The interior design firm Intarya is known for its high-end, cross-cultural style - recent commissions include the World Trade Centre penthouses in Dubai.



The four diamond-shaped blocks house 86 gleaming apartments and three ground-floor luxury boutiques. The development, which towers over Hyde Park and Knightsbridge, was built using 70,000 tonnes of concrete.



## WHAT'S ON OFFER?



Seventy-seven properties, including ten penthouses and two townhouses, in a Grade II-listed building, formerly the Lancaster Gate Thistle Hotel. The French Renaissance-style terrace, on the north side of Hyde Park, has 270 windows facing the park.

## CASH INJECTION

Sheikh Al-Thani (left) has personally backed the project. However, recent legal wrangles have soured the Candy-Qatari partnership after the Qatari royal family's property company, Qatari Diar, withdrew a planning application for the £3 billion Chelsea Barracks development following the intervention of Prince Charles.

The project has been funded in part by selling off 27 per cent of the development in advance - two blocks of apartments at £53 million each - to two foreign buyers. One was Dubai-based, and sources claim the second buyer was Roman Abramovich (right), who made the purchase through a fund, but his spokesman has denied this.

An average of £20 million for an apartment, with some buyers paying a world-record £6,000 per sq ft. One penthouse is said to have been sold for over £100 million, making it the world's most expensive.

## COST



An average of nearly £10 million per apartment - more than £3,000 per sq ft. Two-bedroom apartments cost from £2 million to £2.5 million, while the five-bedroom properties are £25 million to £30 million. The townhouses are expected to fetch £40 million.



## ONE HYDE PARK

Burnished and textured metal walls and artworks (left), rich colours and sumptuous gold resin, black onyx and rock crystal finishes inspired by the changing seasons in the park.

### DESIGN CONCEPT

La Belle Epoque meets the Grand Tour: high ceilings, elaborate mouldings, marble baths, porcelain floors and hand-painted murals all add to the effect.

Owners will inhale purified air supplied by specialist systems, while refrigerated ceilings mean there will be no air-conditioning drone. The flick of a switch will flip a flatscreen TV behind a gilt mirror or priceless painting. The most expensive apartments have panic rooms, secret vaults and safes disguised as books, so residents can sleep soundly at night, tucked between their silk sheets.



## THE LANCASTERS



### SKY-HIGH SPEC



The apartments combine lavish modern living with Victorian style. Original cornices excavated from the site have been used to decorate pillars and there are feature fireplaces in all reception rooms. The show apartment comes with a giant nickel birdcage housing African parakeets, chosen for their complementary duck-egg colour rather than their company. An African-style chandelier made of buffalo horn and horse hair hangs in the kitchen, televisions emerge from faux chests of drawers and the fridges boast electronic moving shelves.

The biggest group of buyers to date is Russian. So far, only ten per cent of the 40-plus buyers have been from the UK.



### WHO WILL BUY?



Middle Eastern, Asian, Greek and Russian buyers are showing the most enthusiasm for the development.

An underground passage leading to the Mandarin Oriental hotel means staff can attend to residents' every need round the clock. Likewise, owners can slip through to the Bar Boulud for a late-night champagne mojito. There is a spa, a gym with private pods so you won't break into a sweat in front of your neighbours, squash courts and golf simulators.

### SERVICES

There is a 24-hour concierge service provided by staff in morning suits. Residents have access to a private landscaped garden dotted with palm trees and modern sculptures, as well as an underground spa with treatment and steam rooms.



Big spenders with high-maintenance mistresses and personal-security issues.

### PERFECT FOR

Wealthy foreigners looking to be cocooned in a historical setting while enjoying upmarket facilities and the latest mod cons.

The Candy camp boasts presales of over £870 million, which is being pumped into the project's completion, and claims more than half of the flats have been sold.

### GOING GOING GONE

According to Minerva, more than half of the apartments have been sold with presales totalling £230 million.



With 2,000 people beavering away on site, it looks like the Candy brothers will hit their October 2010 completion date.

### WHEN CAN I MOVE IN?

The first stage is due for completion in February 2011 and the remainder by summer 2011. During the busiest period, there were 650 workers on site every day.



To get permission for the Knightsbridge development, the Candys had to agree to build affordable housing, offering first-time buyers shared ownership as part of the Peel House scheme. To avoid lowering the tone of One Hyde Park, however, the affordable flats are being constructed two miles away in a converted police training centre in Pimlico. And don't expect any gym pods.

### CONTROVERSY

The Lancasters' developer Minerva has recently made public an acrimonious battle with its largest shareholder, billionaire South African investor Nathan Kirsh. Kirsh wants to know what proportion of The Lancasters' future profits will be used as additional security for the company's loans, after £750 million of debt refinancing last September.