

Property

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A Clarges Mayfair penthouse terrace. There are two penthouses located on the top floor spread over the ninth and 10th floors with further roof terrace. — Supplied photo

Clarges Mayfair breaks price record

Abdul Basti

DUBAI — British Land's Clarges Mayfair project received overwhelming response from international property buyers as the developer only released 10 units at the beginning but ended up selling 22 on strong demand.

Knight Frank in its latest research report "Global Development Report 2015" listed Clarges Mayfair as one of the top influential developments in Prime Central London.

"We see growing interest from Dubai and the Middle East. A handful of buyers is based in Dubai for 22 apartments sold," said James Taylor, project director at British Land.

Five of the apartments sold broke the previous price-per-sqft record for Mayfair. The apartments that broke record prices for Mayfair (over £5,000 per sqft) are located on floors four and above.

"Interestingly for British Land, when monitoring where the interest is coming from, with specific reference to the Middle East.. while there are still some families where the buying power and wealth is held by the eldest most senior people in the family, they have seen the wealth coming from the Middle East becoming younger — some in their 20s, 30s, early 40s — have been looking to purchase," Taylor explained.

Here's one area in London that's safe bet for investors

Mayfair attracting Middle East investors amid falling oil and gold prices

Abdul Basti

MIDDLE EASTERN people's interest in London properties remains strong and Prime Central London, or PCL, is on top when it comes to investment in property.

The PCL area always attracts property buyers from the region and Knight Frank's latest data shows Mayfair real estate projects are getting more attention of Gulf investors this time amid falling oil and gold prices.

Property prices in PCL are forecast to rise by 20.5 per cent cumulatively in the next five years, according to Knight Frank's latest report released in November.

Gulf real estate investors ranked second after UK property buyers in the Mayfair area from January 2012 to middle of October 2015, according to the property consultancy firm. Mayfair house prices witnessed nearly 16 per cent growth in the last four years, the consultancy firm said. Mayfair house prices grew 37.5 per cent faster than PCL during the first three quarters of 2015, it added.

Prime London's Mayfair area is making headlines in international media for record prices and has been termed safe deposit for capital investment.

Last July, a Mayfair penthouse was sold for £26 million that set a new record for a residential property in central London and also confirmed that the city remains a



Gulf investors ranked second after UK buyers in the Mayfair area from January 2012 to middle of October 2015. — Supplied photo

valuable market for elite investors. On November 30, Mayfair's "largest luxury apartment" was launched for sale with a price tag of £15.95 million. Offered by selling agents Knight Frank, Savills and Wetherell, it includes a concierge service and private lift lobby for the flat which features a balcony, ensuite bathrooms and library.

Wetherell's chief executive officer Peter Wetherell said: "This magnificent lateral residence has the tallest ceilings and largest room dimensions of any new Mayfair apartment currently on the market."

UK government official data shows the first three quarters of 2015 witnessed £2.5 billion spent

on buying homes worth over £5 million in London, showing a 50 per cent increase on the same period five years ago.

According to Knight Frank, prices and sales of luxury houses and apartments in the last five years surpassed every other major city to make London the first choice for international property investors.

In 2009, there were 2,147 sales of luxury houses and apartments in London in the \$2 million-to-\$5 million price bracket, which put the UK capital behind Hong Kong and nearly at par with New York. But last year, sales in that price bracket in London had jumped to 6,250 — double the number in Manhattan

£15.9m price tag of Mayfair's 'largest luxury apartment' put on sale in November

and triple the number in Singapore, Hong Kong and Sydney.

Prices for prime London property have risen faster than any major city during the last decade. The typical Mayfair or Holland Park apartment in central-west London has jumped in price by 138 per cent since 2004, said Knight Frank, whereas in second-placed Hong Kong, prices for prime property have risen 93 per cent. New York was next, with gains of 78 per cent, followed by Singapore with 69 per cent.

Mayfair is currently in the midst of its most exciting and changing decade in nearly a century. Property consultancy Wetherell's latest development data reveals that there are currently 36 residential schemes in the pipeline across Mayfair with 598 new units proposed, giving a gain of 586 units for the area.

Mayfair residential sales so far over the last 12 months are down 16 per cent in terms of number of units sold but the average price has increased due to some high ticket sales, however, the average pound per square foot has remained consistent, increasing only by 2.5 per cent on the previous 12 months.

Nearly 50 per cent of sales have been under £2 million and just un-

This lateral residence has the tallest ceilings and largest room dimensions

Peter Wetherell, CEO of Wetherell

der 25 per cent between £2 million to £5 million with this segment now seasonally entering its busiest quarter of the year.

Mayfair has long been seen as a "golden postcode" for the wealthiest London property buyers. The Qatari royal family has snapped up so much prime real estate that the area has been dubbed "Little Doha". Its portfolio is worth billions of pounds and includes properties such as the Connaught Hotel, residences on Mount Street and a £200 million mansion on Park Lane.

As the epicentre of luxury London, Mayfair has almost three times more Michelin-starred restaurants than any other residential district in London and four times more five-star hotels. With achieved prices for the best new-build schemes approaching, and in some cases exceeding £5,000 per square foot, Mayfair is on track to regain its status as London's premier address and merit its position of supremacy on the Monopoly board.

The next five years are set to see a major change in Mayfair. Within the development pipeline in Mayfair there will be a loss of 100,000 sqm of office space and a gain of over 110,000 sqm of residential space.

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