



TOP: Exterior of the Clarges Estate Development  
ABOVE: At the centre of the reception area is a bespoke desk with inlaid patterns made from leaves collected from Green Park

# Clarges sets new benchmark for offices

THE OFFICE ELEMENT OF BRITISH LAND'S CLARGES ESTATE DEVELOPMENT REFLECTS ALL THE GRANDEUR OF MAYFAIR'S LUXURY HOMES, AS HARDEEP SANDHER DISCOVERS



The official launch of the offices within the Clarges Estate development by British Land last month marked a milestone for the developer and Mayfair's property market.

For British Land, Clarges is the listed property giant's largest scheme in Mayfair for 25 years, despite the group having extensive experience of successfully developing commercial property in the West End, including Regent's Place and Paddington Central.

Once complete, Clarges will include a collection of 34 new luxury apartments directly overlooking Green Park and the associated offices, which sit adjacent to the residential scheme in a separate building, will deliver 47,800 sq ft of office space and 14,800 sq ft of retail and leisure space.

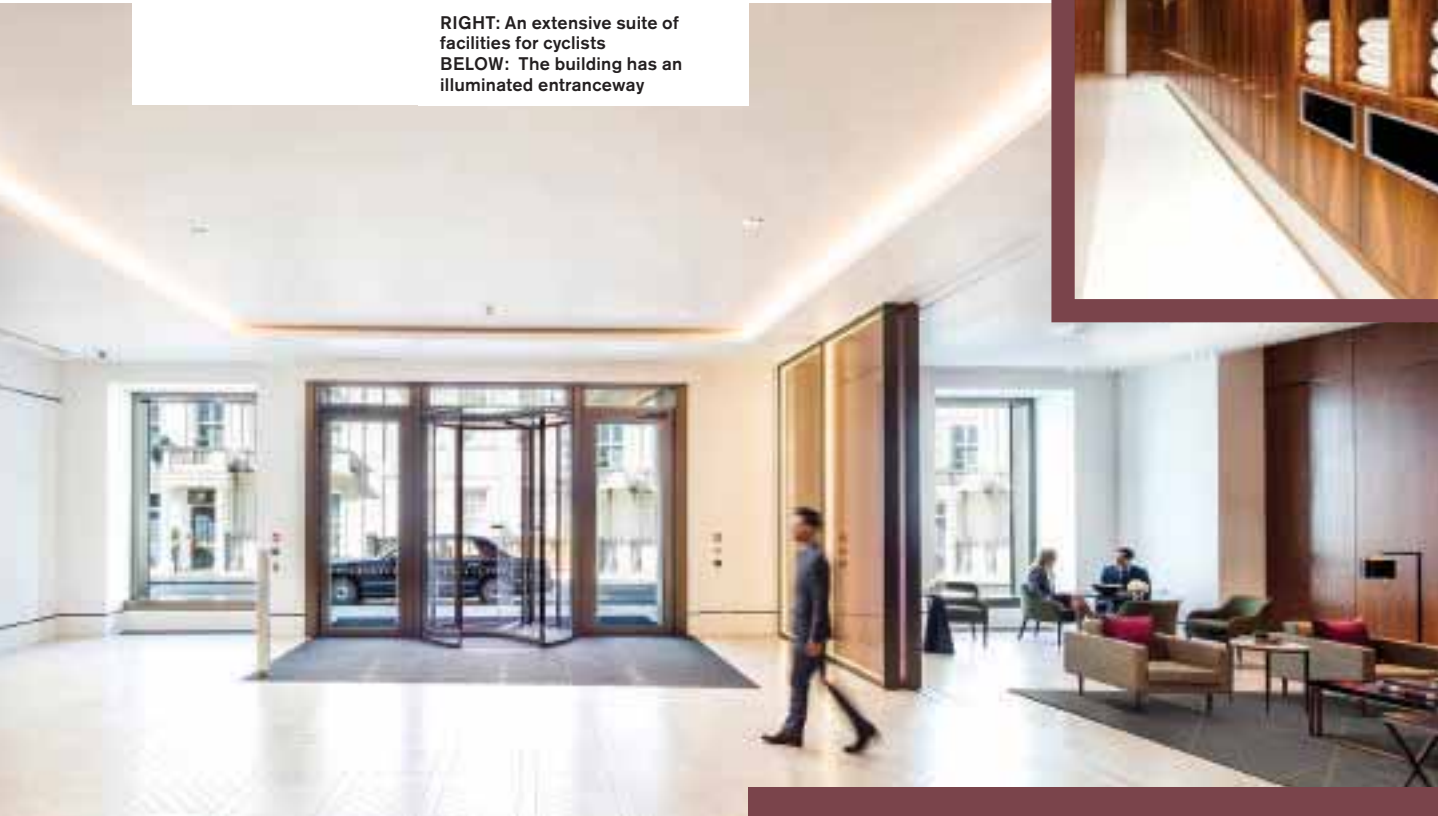
The scheme also includes the new headquarters of the Kennel Club, also on Clarges Street, which was completed last year. The residential and commercial element of the scheme has been built to set a new international benchmark for design and architecture and is designed by world renowned Squire & Partners.

The residential element of the scheme is due to complete in 2017, with over half of the apartments having pre-sold early in the first release in 2014, with prices setting a new record for Mayfair and reflecting an average capital value of £4,750 per sq ft.

But it is not just the residential element of the Estate that is placing an extra emphasis on luxury. The newly-launched offices have an array of amenities – including garden terraces on the top three floors.

“The high-end residential market is always subject to heavy scrutiny in Mayfair, with every last detail very important in creating the end product. We believe offices and people's workspace should be no different,” explains Michael Wiseman, head of office leasing at British Land.

RIGHT: An extensive suite of facilities for cyclists  
BELOW: The building has an illuminated entranceway



In many ways, the luxury element of the office scheme is no surprise. Squire & Partners' aim was to create a bespoke office building as part of a "family" of new buildings which incorporated the super prime Clarges Mayfair apartments on Piccadilly.

Tim Gledstone, partner at Squire & Partners, says: "We understood from the beginning that this wasn't a British Land building, it is a Mayfair building. So we wanted to understand why people are here, in Mayfair, and what Mayfair represents."

The six-storey building is a contemporary take on the traditional Mayfair aesthetic, finished with Portland stone and an illuminated entranceway, which according to the group, is reflecting the classic covered entrances of nearby Claridge's and Burlington Arcade. Light is a key factor throughout the building and the fully glazed openings at street level provide views into the large reception space, which doubles as a gallery space with bespoke artworks displayed throughout. Interestingly, the space can be configured by sliding walls in different ways to host corporate events, for example.

With the offices likely to be let to multi-occupiers, a reflection of the Mayfair market itself, Gledstone alludes to a 'Mayfair club' like feeling that the building has, which has come to fruition via the numerous "intimate" touches and the services on offer.

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"A lot of people that have bought in Clarges, or live in Mayfair, may also have businesses here. So it fits in with the kind of market they are used to and the things they want. Every piece that has been selected, such as specific art commissioned for the lobby, is considered to be right for this building.

"There is also a lot of intimate detailing that you do not expect in a corporate building. So we have showers, complete with towels and other amenities in keeping with that club style, and an extensive suite of facilities for cyclists as well."

Gledstone believes the scheme has a certain grandness to it or "the Mayfair grandeur" as he calls it.

The scheme does indeed exude the type of grandeur that would not be out of place in some of the luxury homes found in Mayfair. Floor to ceiling windows – which can be opened - let in an abundance of light, allowing the views to stretch out over Green Park as





TOP: Showers, complete with towels, are part of the offer. LEFT: Large floorplates and floor-to-ceiling windows. BELOW: The bespoke desk in reception, made of bronze



well. On the three uppermost levels of the scheme private terraces with views across to Victoria are available.

The intimate touches Gledstone refers to include products by light sculpture specialist Haberdashery, which has crafted a sleek installation in the reception area, reflecting the muted check pattern of the limestone flooring.

The building's surroundings are echoed throughout the interior design - leaves of Green Park are etched upon each of the many hundreds of glass shards that form this light sculpture, and reflected in a carefully positioned mirrored table that sits beneath it.

Meanwhile, in keeping with the Green Park theme, at the centre of the reception area is a bespoke desk commissioned from creative studio Based Upon, presented as a fragmented mass of bronze - dark and textured on the exterior and molten smooth inside - which on closer inspection reveals inlaid patterns made from leaves collected from Green Park

Wiseman says: "British Land has been very open-minded with this project - being in a new location, we knew that there is a need to understand the Mayfair market and the scheme is different to other office projects we have completed.

"The large floorplates and floor-to-ceiling windows are a reference to the luxury elements that are seen in many residential properties.

"And I think it is true to say the lines between residential and offices are blurring now; it is no longer

acceptable to simply deliver an office scheme without thinking about the details."

But it is not just the office part of the scheme that is set to attract attention. The scheme includes almost 15,000 sq ft of retail/restaurant space on the ground floor - as yet unlet, but Wiseman says discussions are ongoing. It is believed the end tenant is most likely to be a high-end restaurant, however no announcement has been made on this.

"This space is integral to the building and helps with the placemaking of the scheme as a whole," explains Wiseman. "We are very excited about the space and what it could add to the scheme."