



## Brave new world

The exclusive, high-spec estates of north Surrey are seeing lively activity—and for good reason

**I**N an arcane sector of the marketplace that traditionally hates uncertainty and thrives in times of prosperity, who would have thought that the world's richest people would be lining up to view the most expensive new mansions for sale in north Surrey's most exclusive estates?

'It's happening right now in St George's Hill and Wentworth, where, so far this year, activity has been liveliest in the £15 million–£30 million price bracket,' reveals Tim Garbett of Knight Frank in Esher. He believes that a combination of global instability and the current weakness of sterling has jolted anxious overseas investors—notably from Asia and the Middle East—into seeking 'safe havens' within some of the UK's most secure private developments.

However, Mr Garbett warns that 'buyers at this level are notoriously demanding and, although security



Dawn Hill (above and top) is set in three acres of mature landscaped grounds on the Wentworth estate and boasts sumptuous interiors, including a 2,000-bottle wine cellar. £29m

may be a prime concern, there's no question of compromising on quality. Any house that fails to tick every box on their wish list in terms of location, construction, design and layout won't get a second look. On the other hand, knowing that the perfect house is a rare animal, they will often wait two or three years for the right one to come along and, when it does, they rarely haggle about the price'.

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London-based developer Consero, founded in 2004, identified a gap in the Surrey country-house market for high-spec new 21st-century mansions and, since then, it has designed, built and sold luxury houses valued at more than \$1 billion in London and the Home Counties. Consero's most recent successful offering in north Surrey is Hurstbourne on the prestigious Wentworth estate, founded in the 1920s and originally home to the sister of the 1st Duke of Wellington. Launched on the market early this



Above: Hurstbourne on the Wentworth estate was sold to an Asian buyer for £25m

Below: Elegant Camp End Manor on St George's Hill. £25m

year at a guide price of £25m through Knight Frank and Barnes Private Office, Hurstbourne sold in mid August to an Asian buyer.

Traditionally built in solid stone in the classical Palladian style, Hurstbourne stands in secluded mature grounds of three acres overlooking the golf course. With materials sourced from around the globe, the imposing 23,000sq ft mansion incorporates some spectacular original elements, including a dramatic façade of French

limestone, hand-carved by Artisans of Paris, and is powered throughout by the latest in user-friendly technology.

The focal point of the grand entrance hall is a splendid circular staircase highlighted by bespoke handmade chandeliers extending over all three floors, with lofty, 12ft-plus ceilings allowing views of the grounds and golf course from all the main ground-floor rooms. Decor clearly aimed at the international market includes a vast master suite with bathrooms finished in gleaming mother-of-pearl and a sumptuous dining room lined with handmade silk wall finishes from the Far East.

Time and tide wait for no man in this challenging arena and, far from resting on its laurels, Consero has followed up with the recent launch of Hurstbourne's sister building, the 26,150sq ft Dawn Hill at Wentworth. For sale through Knight Frank (020-7861 1552) and Hanover Private Office (020-7935 5797) at a guide price of £29m, Dawn Hill is another paragon of Palladian magnificence, set in three acres of mature landscaped gardens, with the same vast Classical proportions and iconic façade, hand-carved in Paris from natural French limestone.

The ground floor, built around a 52ft-long grand hallway with 12½ft-high ceilings lit by glittering chandeliers and intricately carved stonemasonry, sets the scene. All the main entertaining and family living spaces are accessed from here, inc-





# Property market

cluding the 22-seat dining room, the custom-designed kitchen, the family room, drawing room, library, study, reading room and morning room.

The first floor houses six luxurious bedroom suites linked by a central hallway. The 1,650sq ft master suite, which incorporates a lounge area, separate his-and-her bathrooms and huge dressing rooms, enjoys beautiful views over the treetops from three south-facing balconies.

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Playtime takes place on the lower-ground floor, the centrepiece of which is a leisure complex with 10½ft-high ceilings and a 13m swimming pool, steam room, sauna, gym and a sunken limestone terrace opening out from the pool into the rear garden.

Other amenities include a sumptuous home cinema with the best digital-screen technology and tiered sofa seating for 18 guests, a showcase 2,000-bottle wine cellar, a games room and a bar, a massage and treatment suite and an eight-car underground garage. Also located on this floor is a discreet, four-bedroom staff apartment, with its own separate entrance.

Over on St George's Hill, joint agents Knight Frank (01932 548004) and Savills (01932 838004) are celebrating the unveiling of the iconic Camp End Manor, arguably the Hill's most prestigious new launch of the autumn season, at a guide price of £25m. More than 100 highly skilled craftspeople have been involved in the creation of this very English house, built to exacting international standards for developer Werner Capital by architect Lees Associates, with interiors designed by Linley.

Camp End Manor takes its name from the Iron Age fort that once occupied this unique site at the highest point of the 900-acre estate, the ramparts of which still define the south and west boundaries of its garden. Consequently, the house can claim the best views of all 440 houses on St George's Hill, with an uninterrupted



**Camp Hill Manor's luxurious interiors (above and top) were designed by Linley and created by more than 100 highly skilled craftspeople. The house is the Hill's most prestigious launch of the autumn season**

outlook over at least 20 miles of the surrounding Surrey countryside.

Located centrally on its 1.4-acre plot, the elegant 14,600sq ft house, arranged over two storeys with a basement level below, is rooted in the landscape, with each of its four façades reflecting a separate area of the garden and surroundings below. At ground-floor level, the principal living spaces are arranged in the three wings of the house around a grand elliptical 'floating' staircase, crafted by hand in the finest French limestone, with ancillary accommodation occupying the spaces in between.

The ground floor comprises an entrance hall, an ante room, a gun room (a must-have in Surrey these days?), a drawing room, a study/library, a dining room, two kitchens and a family room, with all the main rooms having exceptionally high ceilings to create a sense of harmony. The palatial master suite takes up the full length of the south side of the house at first-floor level and enjoys the finest views.

The lower-ground floor contains the leisure spaces where, stepping carefully down the helical stairs, you can glimpse the 12m pool through a full-height glazed wall, before arriving in the wine bar—the perfect place to unwind. 🐦