

Palladian palace provides vision for park paradise

Sundridge Park estate is being transformed into beautiful new homes, says **Alison Tyler**



Grand: CGI of how the homes will look when completed

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TURNING down a leafy lane, just a mile from the centre of Bromley, you'd be forgiven for thinking you were in the countryside. As I cross Sundridge Park golf course I feel like I must have taken a wrong turn, but I continue on, through the woods and Humphry Repton-landscaped parkland, to be eventually rewarded by a spectacular new development.

First the Palladian sugar-lump of a John Nash mansion comes into view, which is currently being restored and will later become homes. Then, as I round the corner, I'm greeted by Millgate's most prestigious development to date – a collection of 14 townhouses, 25 apartments and three detached family homes that look as though they could have been here for years.

Communal terraced gardens already look mature and established, while the individual low-maintenance gardens that back on to them are meticulously manicured.

The detail on the grand buildings is equally exquisite: from the soft buff brickwork to the chunky off-white stucco facades and even the relief motifs on the drainpipes. It is worthy of an impressive country estate



PHOTO: DANIEL LYNCH

Making progress: The development will offer a wide variety of homes

which, of course, is what Sundridge Park is – albeit one that's just a 15-minute drive from Canary Wharf and a stone's throw from Bromley town centre.

'This is by far the biggest project we have undertaken,' explains Jonathan Cranley, sales and marketing director at Millgate. 'Not many developers would have taken on the project – even the gardens and garden walls are listed, so it's a labour of love – but it's such a fantastic location that we felt we had to do it justice and create something truly special.'

Before work could begin on the new estate, a tired 1950s block had to be taken down and cleared. Millgate bought the site in 2006, just before the market collapsed, but rather than abandoning its bold vision, it used the recession to improve the plans to offer a larger variety of homes, broadening Sundridge

Park's appeal. 'We always imagined it would appeal to local down-sizers as there are a lot of large houses nearby, and also to members of the golf club, but the proximity to London and to some of the best schools in the capital means it's also ideal for execs and families wanting a retreat away from the city,' says Cranley.

The addition of three seriously upscale houses are sure to appeal to the City bosses sitting at the top of Canary Wharf's towers, just nine miles away.

When Sundridge Park was built 200 years ago, it was a favourite haunt of King Edward VII and Napoleon III, so it's no surprise that an architect associated with royalty has been charged with recreating the Regency splendour of the estate. Robert Adam, Prince Charles's favourite designer, has created sweeping Georgian style frontages with classical proportions.

Cars will be hidden away beneath the development, so that a central tree-lined avenue will create a lung between the two

main buildings. Inside, the houses are extremely generous – the hallways are vast and offer plenty of storage (there's even an integral garage on the ground floor); the first-floor drawing room opens on to a wide balcony to soak up the views, and the master suite has the feel of a boutique hotel – the en suite comes with a bath and a walk-in wet room-style shower.

The wide, reassuringly solid American oak staircase leads up to a top floor filled with light thanks to a mirrored roof 'lantern', with three further bedrooms and a family bathroom.

Even the apartments feel huge, offering lateral living and large, Georgian-style windows. There's no UPVC here – the finish is uncompromisingly high.

No doubt Nash would have been proud to see the legacy of this great estate revived for the next 200 years.

■ Prices from £695,000, millgatehomes.co.uk

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From 32 minutes
Commute cost:
Annual season ticket £1,844
Prices from:
£695,000
Bedrooms:
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