

World's most expensive mews house: former garage sold for £24m

Jonathan Prynne and Adrian Hearn

A FORMER Mayfair garage that housed Bentley racing cars in the Twenties has become the world's most expensive mews house after being sold to a Qatari buyer for about £24 million.

The double-fronted seven-bedroom home started life as a stables to a mansion on Upper Grosvenor Street before being converted into garages. It has now been gutted apart from the façade and renovated.

The 6,200 sq ft home on Reeves Mews is in the heart of west Mayfair's "Qatari quarter" around Mount Street, where many homes have been snapped up by senior politicians and royal family members from the Gulf nation.

The buyer is thought to be Qatar's former deputy prime minister and top power broker Hamad Khalifa Abdullah Al-Attiyah.

The house is set over four floors. It includes a cinema room with a 70in screen, gym, lift, wine cellar, garage and a winter garden roof terrace.

There is a central 43ft staircase and a chandelier the height of three storeys, which is so heavy that the roof had to be reinforced. Staff quarters are on the lower ground floor.

James Van Den Heule, director of Fenton Whelan, the developer behind the conversion, confirmed it had been sold but would not discuss it further.

It is located in a part of Mayfair that became known as "Bentley's Corner" in the Twenties when glamorous Bentley Boys such as Woolf "Babe" Barnato – winner of three Le Mans 24-hour races – and Sir Henry "Tim" Birkin kept their cars.

James Robinson, general manager at mews specialists Lurot Brand, described the property as "phenomenal" and believes it could be a shrewd buy. It has been on the market for



Change of gear: the dining room and exterior of the mews house in Mayfair, once a garage that housed Bentley racing cars in the Twenties



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almost a year. He said: "For many years mews houses were the rubbish behind the main homes but today they are like a little oasis."

"They are very discreet and secure and in the best part of town. Reeves Mews ticks all the boxes – it really has been done to the highest standards."

"To get almost £4,000 per sq ft is astounding, although it has been done beautifully and is in a great part of town. What is refreshing is that they haven't gone too subterranean. It is quite humble from the outside but behind the façade it is phenomenal. When I started

selling mews houses in the late Eighties they were a lot more affordable. You could get them for around £200,000 but this was at a time when there were a lot of garages, so they were noisy with people doing MOTs."

"Once the garages started to leave the prices started rising and they're only going one way. I can't think of another mews house which has sold for this much. If the owner keeps it for 10 years it might be worth £44 million."

Stamp duty on a £24 million home is around £2.8 million, but Fenton Whelan would not confirm the price paid.



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