



A Chapel Turned Queen Music Video Set Turned Luxury Home... Inside Connaught House

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17 Hours Ago

The history of this property is ga-ga

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From a [courtroom turned TV set](#), to a [glassy new structure](#) on the former site of the New Scotland Yard, it seems that historic plots are increasingly being repurposed as sparkly new developments. And [former churches](#) are a particular favourite for conversion. The latest in the trend? Connaught House: a new residential development with a storied past.

Discover Connaught House



The History

First built in 1841, this property started life not as Connaught House, but as Connaught Chapel. Opened to the public in 1842, this heavenly home served a growing suburban community within the Portland Town estate of the wealthy Eyre family.

Located in St John's Wood, the chapel was designed by John Tarring – a leading architect in the Gothic Revival movement of the Victorian era – with the chapel's elegant neoclassical facade, corinthian columns and portico reflecting the hefty architectural ambitions of early St John's Wood.

Though the chapel remained active throughout the late 19th century, with a modest congregation of around 200 people, declining attendance at the turn of the century led to its eventual closure in 1922.



Forced to adapt to a newly secular world, Connaught was re-opened as a squash club in 1935, undergoing major internal alterations and a new rear extension. The bell turret was removed and doorways reconfigured, but the classical frontage survived. Following this short athleisure stint, plans were drawn up to demolish the site to make way for a school – an action thankfully halted by strong public opposition.

Though nearby terraces were lost to wartime bombing, Connaught Chapel survived. In 1945, the building was given a fresh lease of life, reimagined as a theatrical scenery workshop and ballet practice space.

Newly christened as a creative hotspot, the property transformed into a film and TV studio, home to Montague Productions and later St John's Wood Studios Ltd. Several films were made on the site, though most are now forgotten. For any niche historical film buffs, the best-known features include Peter Cook and Dudley Moore's black comedy *Bedazzled* (1967), *30 is a Dangerous Age*, *Cynthia* (1968), *The Rise and Rise of Michael Rimmer* (1970) and *Secrets of a Door-to-Door Salesman* (1973). By the 1970s and 1980s, the studios had become a hub of London's creative industries, hosting stage, television and music video productions – most famously serving as the set for the futuristically dystopian world of Queen's 'Radio Ga Ga' (1984).



Though the facade has suffered unsympathetic repairs over time, its classical portico remains. In 1986, Westminster City Council supported sensitive restoration work, securing its Grade II listed status in 1987. Continuing to run as a studio, now under the remit of Carlton Television, in the 1990s it gained permission to be transformed into a residential development. Newly protected by its listed status, it has evolved through a series of heritage-led conversions, with the latest developers pledging to reinstate and repair its lost features.

Step Inside

Spanning 19,000 sqft Connaught House sits in the heart of St John's Wood. With five turn-key apartments available, the development is planned for completion in Q4 of this year.



Working alongside architectural practice Darling Associates, Valouran is carrying out a sensitive transformation of Connaught House, restoring many of its original features. Most notably, it is reintroducing the cupola which once crowned Connaught's roofline. Removed in 1922, this defining feature has been missing for over 100 years. Reinstating the cupola to its prominent position, as well as restoring the portico, handcrafted windows and refined rooflines, the project will return the balance and grandeur of the building's classical facade to its former glory.

Inside, the designs have been brought to life by Gunter & Co. Shaped by the building's original architectural features, the interiors combine period comfort with character, each unique apartment crafted to celebrate the building's distinct character. The apartments range from two to four bedroom homes, spanning from 1,722 sqft to 4,510 sqft homes – defined by gentle curves, soaring ceiling and light-soaked windows. Other amenities include a dedicated concierge service, subterranean parking space and select private landscaped gardens and terraces.

Prices start from £5,165,000. Find out more at www.connaught-house.com