



What Lies BENEATH

Space has long been at a premium in London and architects and developers are always looking for new ways to exploit square footage. Cue the deeper and down trend for going underground. Luke Thomas investigates

Often regarded as largely obsolete space, a locale where long defunct family furniture is stored alongside the curio collection of suitcases, many homeowners in the capital are now seeing basement square footage as a genuine option for expanding existing living space at a fraction of the cost (and hassle) of moving.

While building up continues to be the 'go-to' solution for many and one of the best ways of adding value and capacity to a property, the very nature and eccentricities of original architecture, combined with planning restrictions often make it difficult to extend more traditional bricks and mortar skywards.

In the search for a Plan B square footage solution - subterranean developments are becoming increasingly popular with the super-rich, providing a significant amount of additional space. So much so, the process has been labelled as "luxified troglodytism".

The University of Newcastle's global urban research unit has previously extracted data from planning portals for the seven London boroughs of Camden, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringay, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth and Westminster.

For prime locations in the capital - building down it seems, can greatly increase the value of an already pricey



WINNINGTON ROAD

- A stunning house that was rebuilt behind the original façade four years ago, Winnington Road provides over 10,000 square foot of accommodation. The property is set on a wide tree-lined street with a reputation for impressive homes, adjacent to the world-famous Bishops Avenue.
- A fine example of a property with a brilliantly converted basement. The lower floor features a fabulous entertainment room, a gym with shower room, a cinema room with full surround sound, a staff bedroom suite, a wine cellar and a spectacular eight-car showroom.

<https://arlingtonresidential.com/property/28467401/>



abode, as London agent and Director of Arlington Residential, Marc Schneiderman comments:

“It’s simple really. Most of a homeowner’s wealth is tied up in their property, so adding quality and space to an existing home is a great way of increasing its value. If you have the appetite and understanding and can ensure that the work is carried out correctly – the added value to your property will likely be more than the cost to build it.

Usage of space has to be appropriate though. Take a three-storey Victorian terraced house. One of the biggest errors can be moving the kitchen into the basement. It’s tempting as it creates more space for other room types, but for the modern buyer, the kitchen is the heart of the house. Most people look for it to lead out onto outdoor space – a seamless flow into the garden.”