

THE MODERN HOUSE



Barbican, London EC2
Sold

Brandon Mews III

This exceptional two-bedroom Grade II-listed house forms part of the iconic Brandon Mews terrace in the heart of the Barbican. The recent subject of an extensive and sensitive renovation by the architect Bert Rozeman, the interior is defined by its original mid-century features that blend harmoniously with its more contemporary detailing. Living spaces extend across three storeys with a wonderful U-shaped window that frames views over Speed Garden and invites a superb quality of natural light into the living space.

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The Architect

In 1951 the City of London ran a competition for architects to submit plans for a scheme in order to replace buildings destroyed by a night of bombing in December 1940. The proposal was to be called the Golden Lane Estate. Peter Chamberlin, Geoffrey Powell and Christoph Bon all submitted plans and agreed that if one of their practices won, they would form a partnership and work together on the project. Powell won the competition, and thus Chamberlin, Powell & Bon was formed in 1952. After their success with the Golden Lane Estate, the firm was asked to design the Barbican Estate, now London's most iconic brutalist complex. For more information, see the History section below.

The Building

Brandon Mews, completed in 1969, is positioned between Speed House and Andrewes House. It forms the east side of Speed Gardens and continues behind the ornamental, brutalist waterfall at the southern end of the Barbican lake. The duplex apartments are immediately recognisable thanks to their spectacular floor-to-ceiling U-shaped windows, echoed by the curvature of a distinctive perspex structure that covers the regular pitched roofs.

The Tour

Every aspect of the interior has been exceptionally well-considered, with distinct sensitivity to the architectural integrity of the building. The original open-tread timber staircase is a superb original feature at the centre of the plan; a large skylight above optimises the double-height nature of the space and invites dramatic shards of light to penetrate this part of the house.

The entrance to the apartment is at podium level, leading into the bright entrance hall and arterial corridor. Original stairs descend to the split-level living space, which seamlessly extends across the ground floor. Arranged in an open-plan layout, with an easy sense of flow between the kitchen, dining and living room, the space lends itself perfectly to entertaining. The central dining area has a black Vitsoe shelving unit across one wall. This area steps down to the living room, where the U-shaped window creates a natural centrepiece and floods the space with light. This is the perfect place to relax and enjoy views over the peaceful Speed Gardens.

The kitchen is tucked neatly at the back of the plan, where polychromatic tiling and wooden worktops echo the original design motifs of Chamberlain, Powell and Bonn. Hardwood worktops extend along both sides of the room, with matt black cabinetry above providing ample storage. A long, vertical window extends along one workbench, inviting light into the room.



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The first of the beautifully proportioned bedrooms is set to the immediate right of the entrance corridor. Adjacent is a separate WC with a double-height curved ceiling that extends to a skylight. This feature is repeated in the contemporary bathroom that, following a monochromatic theme, is finished with black tiles against white walls. Conveniently positioned opposite the bathroom is a sleek wardrobe with ample storage. The main bedroom has a matching wardrobe and a wall-sized window that, with its westerly aspect, affords further leafy views over Speed Gardens.

The lower-level room has been fully renovated and is currently used as a sleeping area and office. Here, the concrete walls retain the character and material sensibility for which the Barbican is renowned. Underfloor heating warms the space, extending below the black slate tiles that feature throughout the house.

Although not formally part of the footprint, the integral garage serves as an extensive storage area for the exclusive use of the house's residents. It can be purchased by separate negotiation and, with the relevant permissions, converted to a living space.

Outdoor Space

One of the principal intents of the original plan of the Barbican was to provide an enclosed sanctuary for the estate's residents. In the estate, both public and private outdoor spaces are concentrated centrally, and residents have access to a number of both private and public gardens.

The principal private gardens extend to approximately two and a half acres and are sited at the eastern and western ends of the Barbican lake, extending to over one and a half acres. These gardens are laid out in a naturalistic manner with expansive lawns punctuated by the cover of foliage from various species of mature trees and surrounded by rich and textural borders planted with both native and exotic species. This whole ensemble makes for a tranquil and secluded retreat in the heart of the city, and this resource is often seen as one of the most unexpected but cherished aspects of life in the Barbican.

There are dedicated areas for children's play along with various architectural follies, including a brutalist waterfall and a sunken garden and seating area set within the lake.

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The Area

The Barbican has many public facilities available to residents within the Arts Centre, with its theatre, art gallery, concert venue, cinemas, and several bars and cafes. The City of London has recently appointed Allies and Morrison Architects and Asif Khan Studio to deliver a multi-million-pound renewal of the Barbican Centre. The Centre forms a key part of the 'Culture Mile', the City of London's cultural district stretching from Farringdon to Moorgate. The 'Cultural Mile' includes the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, the London Symphony Orchestra and the Museum of London. It provides a vibrant and creative area with a diverse and international cultural program of concerts, events, and performances.

The apartment is near an excellent selection of pubs and restaurants, including the nearby Smithfield Market, St. John, Luca, The Quality Chop House, and the Exmouth Market. Whitecross Street also has a food market every weekday. St Paul's, the River Thames, the South Bank and Tate Modern are all close by.

Transport links are excellent, with Underground stations at nearby Barbican (Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan Lines), Old Street (Northern Line), Farringdon (Circle, Hammersmith & City, and Metropolitan Lines, plus Thameslink services to Gatwick Airport, Brighton and Bedford) and Moorgate (Northern, Hammersmith & City, Circle and Metropolitan Lines). The Elizabeth Line has recently commenced service from Farringdon. This station now offers high-speed transit across the East-West axis of London, extending out to Heathrow (with a direct service from Farringdon to Heathrow scheduled to start in Spring 2023).

Tenure: Leasehold Lease Length: approx. 83 years remaining Service Charge: approx. £4,500 per annum Ground Rent: approx. £10 per annum Council Tax Band: E

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About

The Modern House is an estate agency that helps people live in more thoughtful and beautiful ways. We believe in design as a powerful force for good. Inspired by the principles of modernism, we represent design-led homes across the UK which celebrate light, space and a truth to materials. Esquire credits The Modern House with “rewriting the rulebook on estate agency” and GQ voted us “one of the best things in the world”.