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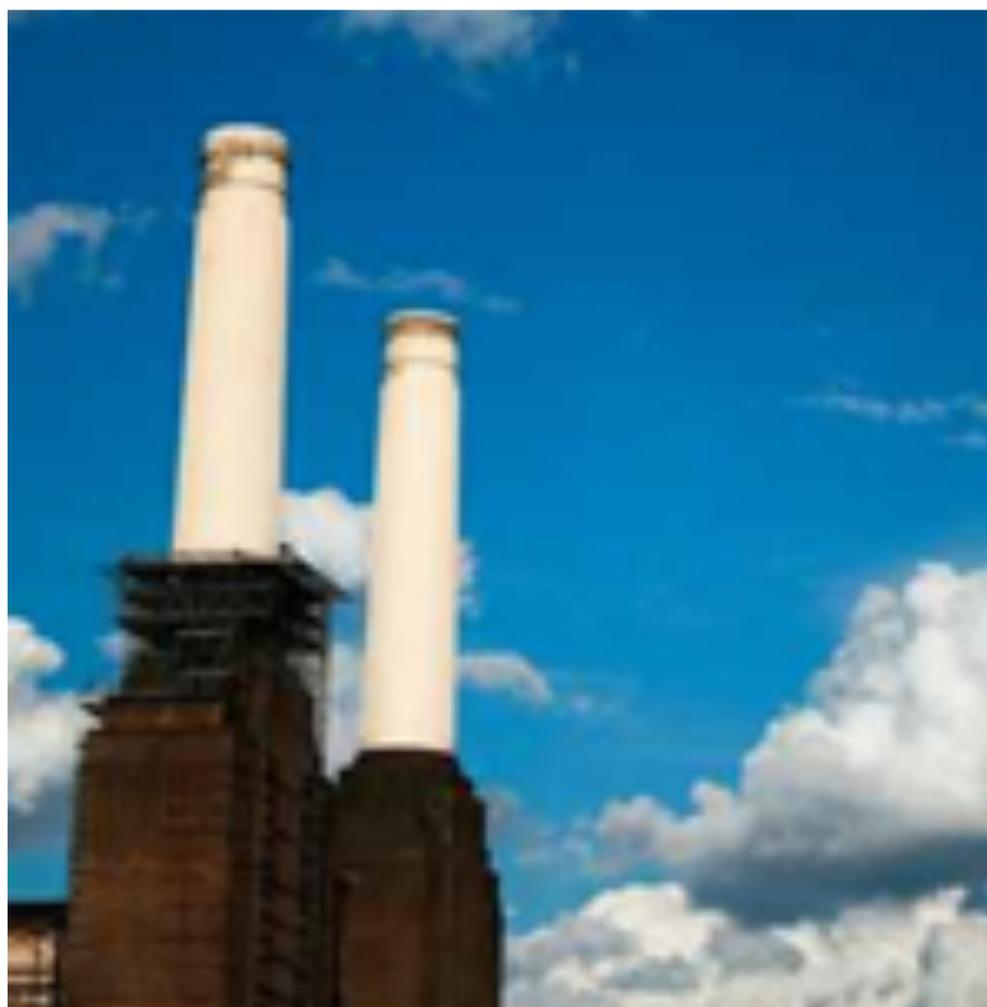
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By [+Kevin Murphy](#) - Friday 02 August 2013

The official start of the first phase of construction of the Battersea Power Station property was celebrated 4 July 2013 with a groundbreaking ceremony with PM David Cameron hosting the Malaysia PM Najib Razak.

The purchase of the property was completed in September 2012, the derelict 40 acre site was [bought for £400 million by Malaysian conglomerate Sime Darby and SP Setia](#) with plans to start construction this September to build 3,500 luxury homes along with offices, retail outlets and restaurants. On the same day [PM David Cameron expressed his vision regarding the resurrection of Battersea Power Station saying it would become a 'symbol of Britain's renewal' in an article he wrote for the Evening Standard.](#)

The event was attended by numerous VIPs and media outlets except for the reporters of the Wandsworth Guardian and the South London Press who were not invited to the event - even though they are the local news outlets for the Battersea area. The Wandsworth Guardian reported on the 5th of July 2013 that [Battersea Power Station Development Company \(BPSDC\) had decided that the two news outlets were 'not important](#)

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enough' to be a part of the celebration.

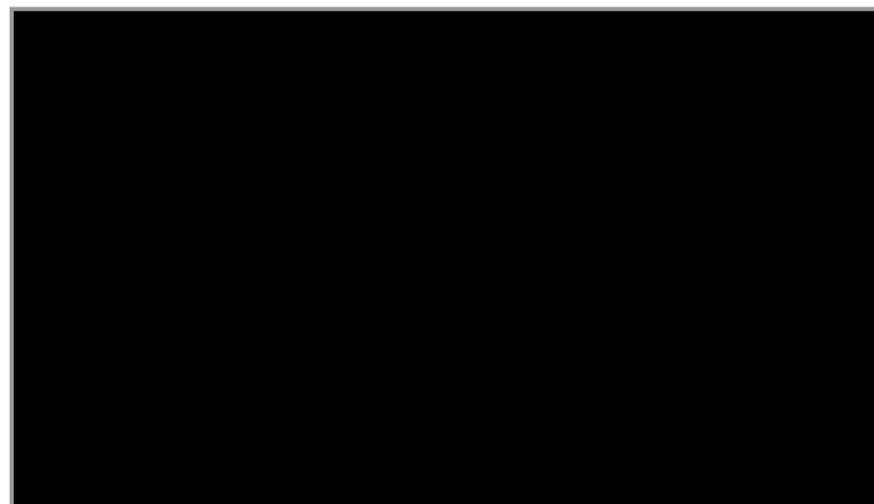
The CEO of the BPSDC is Rob Tincknell who was formerly managing director with the previous owners of the power station, Treasury Holdings. That organization went bankrupt and the property was later sold to Sime Darby and SP Setia Employees Provident Fund.

The areas news organizations have been the voices of the local citizens throughout the 30 year saga of the power stations demise and redevelopment schemes. Many of the locals feel they have been left out of the process over what the future development of Battersea Power Station will become and certainly when it comes to the cost of housing.

Luxury flats priced in the first phase, Circle West, start at £350,000 for a studio and £6 million for a penthouse. Prices that are not affordable for vast numbers of young Londoners who would like to become property owners. It is believed most of the homes will be bought mostly for investment purposes by outsiders mainly from Asia.

I decided to visit the property to see what, if any, changes had occurred since the power station now has new owners. Joining me in a taped interview (below) for their perspective was [Brian Barnes MBE](#) and local architect Keith Garner of the [Battersea Power Station Community Group \(BPSCG\)](#) who have fought for 30 years to have the building preserved. So far little has been done at the property - a large green grass area and sidewalk on the waterfront of the property.

The biggest concerns Barnes and Garner spoke of is the pending demolition of the four iconic chimneys scheduled to start in October 2013.



The BPSCG expressed that this may be an attempt to demolish building completely. By removing the chimneys it would be an opportunity for the developments construction engineers to declare the structure so derelict and therefore too expensive for the chimneys to be replaced.

Even though the developers have made a point of trying to reassure preservation organizations that the chimneys will be replaced others including Barnes and Garner are not convinced that will occur. BPSDC has received approval for its planning application for the "reconstruction" of the chimneys. One chimney will be taken and then reconstructed before the other three are also taken down and reconstructed.

The chimneys were deemed to be so derelict that reconstruction was needed. A bond was required and approved for the full value of the chimneys as part of the planning application submitted by BPSDC thus guaranteeing that the chimneys will be rebuilt and resemble the originals.

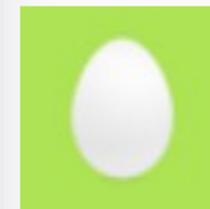
One concern is the changes being made to the role of English Heritage (which oversees listed buildings). English Heritage has approved all plans submitted by BPSDC, however - due to austerity measures in British government budgets [English Heritage will receive a lump sum of £80 million and will have to become a self-sustaining charity.](#)

As a result this might complicate matters further due to the financial costs of any legal action should the Battersea Power Station owners and developers decide replacing the chimneys is not an option.

As Mr. Barnes and Mr. Garner point out the property without the power station would vastly increase the value of the land it is built on and, if pulled down, would allow the property developers to build and sell more luxury flats with commanding views over the Thames waterfront.

conjunction with...

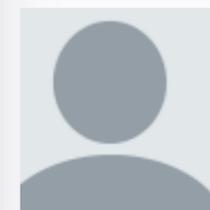
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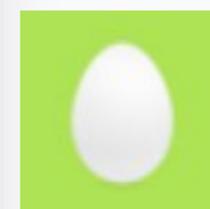
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It is for this reason they speculate that since no real construction has begun, it is because of the chimneys - and whether or not Battersea Power Station stays or goes.

The Battersea Power Station site at the time of filming - Click on the image thumbnails below to open the slideshow gallery.



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