

**Client:** Hamilton Bradshaw  
**Source:** Evening Standard (Main)  
**Date:** 28 April 2014  
**Page:** 46  
**Reach:** 805309  
**Size:** 142cm2  
**Value:** 9421.7



**HAMILTON BRADSHAW**  
Investing in people with passion

## On the scent of a real estate venture? Be sure to try the 'sniff test'

**Ask  
James**



James Caan

*Dear James*

I HAVE recently sold my business, and want to invest in property. You have a real estate business, so what tips would you give? Also, would you recommend I look at property in London or abroad?

*Safraz*

PEOPLE are always looking to invest in property, and the high value nature of the transactions means research is critical. You need to do what I call the

"sniff test". If you're looking to buy a property, walk the streets and analyse everything. Who are the other

tenants, what is the traffic like? Every detail is important and I like to visit locations at least four or five times before I make a final decision.

Look at the location, value per square foot and rental yield. The key to a successful project is to ensure the entry price is right. Construction costs and sales prices will largely fall in line with estimates, so it is the price of the land or property that will determine the level of return.

Although it is not always necessary to invest as part of a team, it could be useful to partner up with somebody, especially if they are experienced. The additional funds and expertise will help you make the right decisions.

I can understand the attraction of investing in property abroad but I am a firm believer that London is the heart of the property market. It is mature and established, which is why it also receives significant investment from overseas buyers.

The other thing you have to

remember is that buying abroad is significantly more risky if you don't understand the market well enough. The laws, culture, dynamics and economic policy are totally different, and when it comes to property you have to minimise the risk.

■ *For more entrepreneurial tips and advice, read James Caan's book **Start Your Business in 7 Days***