

A home fit for a president

Bloomfield House features some famous downtraders, writes **Gabrielle Monaghan**



Ex-president Mary Robinson bought a luxury apartment at Bloomfield House in Donnybrook, Dublin 4, after selling her home on the shores of Lough Conn in Mayo in 2017

NO2 WESTFIELD
Bloomfield House,
Donnybrook, Dublin 4
Asking price: €925,000
Agent: Owen Reilly (01) 677 7100

Where do older residents of the huge trophy homes of Ballsbridge trade down to? Bloomfield House in Donnybrook, Dublin 4, has come full circle: having been built in the 18th century as an elite society home, it is today enjoying a new incarnation as a development of period conversion apartments popular among Ireland's most powerful downtraders, the senior burghers of Ireland's most expensive homes in D4.

Located at the end of Bloomfield Avenue off Morehampton Road, the one time Georgian country house was redeveloped for upmarket apartments and today, following the sale of all the other apartments in the scheme, the last show apartment is for sale for €925,000.

The development has attracted downsizers, which include former president Mary Robinson and her husband Nick, who bought an apartment there last year.

In 2017, the couple sold Massbrook House, a Victorian pile sitting on 113 acres on the shores of Lough Conn in Mayo, just outside her home town of Ballina, for €1.55m. The Robinsons also formerly lived in nearby Ranelagh for many years.

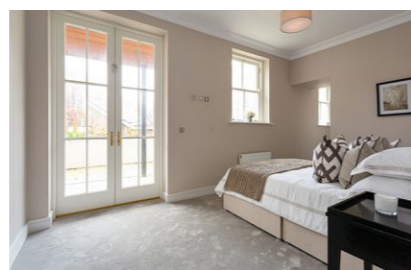
A well-known wealthy Irish financier with property interests in the D4 area is also thought to have been amongst the buyers, along with downtraders from the area's famous period red-brick avenues.

Bloomfield House was constructed around 1790 for William Saurin. A barrister by profession and an MP for Blessington, Saurin was appointed attorney general for Ireland in 1807, effectively controlling the UK's Dublin-based legal administration.

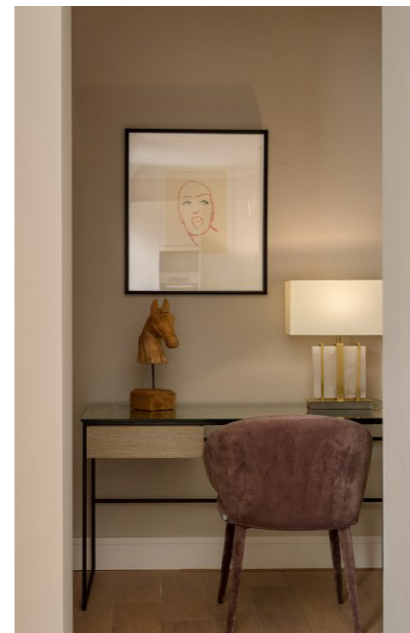
In 1802, Saurin sold Bloomfield House to Dr Robert Emmet, a court physician. Dr Emmet's youngest son Robert was at that time on the run and would famously lead a rebellion against British rule a year later in 1803.

In 1809, six years after Robert Emmet's execution for high treason, his family sold Bloomfield House to the Quakers, who set up a psychiatric hospital there. They later added a north wing and west wing, called Northfield and Westfield respectively. The mental health facility closed in 2005 and the Religious Society of Friends transferred the service to Rathfarnham.

Bloomfield House was then bought by the man behind Galway's G Hotel, Gerry



Clockwise from above: One of the bedrooms of No2 Westfield in Bloomfield House; the dining area with a bay window; the open-plan kitchen/living room/dining room; a study; and the bespoke SieMatic kitchen comes with an island unit/breakfast bar



Barrett of Edward Homes.

With the help of Paul Tyndall Architects, Edward Homes restored Bloomfield House and remodelled its north and west wings to create the eponymous scheme Bloomfield House.

The development comprises Bloomfield House itself and six apartments in each of its two wings, Westfield and Northfield. There are now plans afoot to bring the refurbished main central portion of Bloomfield House, now a four-bedroom home spanning 4,200 sq ft, on to the market at a later stage.

Recently, No3 Northfield, which was also advertised from €925,000, went sale agreed, leaving the No2 Westfield show apartment on the market at the same price. Unusually for a show unit, while No2 has been fitted out by The Interiors Project, the furniture must be bought separately. No2 Westfield is a ground-

floor, two-bed apartment spanning 1,195 sq ft — larger than many a three-bed semi. Inside the entrance hall, there is a bathroom with a shower on the right, and a video intercom linked to the security gates and the car park.

The hallway also leads on to a large kitchen/living/dining room with a south-facing bay window that incorporates a glass door opening on to the first of two terraces. The sash windows to the open-plan kitchen/living/dining space are double-glazed, but have retained their original casements. There is cornicing to the high ceilings and solid wood to the floors (the bedrooms are carpeted).

The bespoke SieMatic kitchen comes with an island unit that doubles as a breakfast bar, stone countertops, a Quooker instant hot water tap to the sink and Miele appliances. Off the kitchen is a tiled utility room with fitted units and

there is a study off the living area.

There are two double bedrooms in the show-apartment, including a master ensuite, and there are custom-made double-height wardrobes to both bedrooms.

A set of French doors opens from the master bedroom on to a sheltered private terrace.

The ensuite is a full bathroom, with a large tub, shower and marble tiling. The main bathroom is contemporary in style and has a rainhead shower, tiling and a heated towel rail. The apartment comes with one designated space in the underground car park. It has access to private landscaped communal gardens with a water feature, an enclosed pergola and a patio.

Viewings are by appointment and under HSE guidelines, and virtual online tours are also available through agent Owen Reilly.

4 On the Market in Waterford



39 The Estuary, King's Channel

€585k DNG REID & COPPINGER (051) 852 233

The King's Channel development is in an easterly suburb of Waterford on the southern bank of the River Suir. It's in walking distance of University Hospital Waterford and about four kilometres from the city centre. Built in the early 2000s, No39 measures 3,348 sq ft and has underfloor heating upstairs as well as down, with a C1 energy rating. The main ground-floor room is an open-plan, split-level lobby and lounge with French doors to the garden. There's also a sitting room, study and kitchen on this floor with five bedrooms upstairs (two with ensuite showers).



The Blue House, Kilminion, Dungarvan

€345k REA SPRATT (058) 42211

A 30-year-old detached bungalow made way for this architect-designed two-storey home about three kilometres east of Dungarvan. Timber-framed and clad in blue shiplap, it has its main living room on the first floor, which is dual-aspect to get the best of the sea views. The main bedroom with ensuite shower and dressing room is also upstairs, with another two bedrooms downstairs. The ground floor also has the kitchen/dining room with a wood-burning stove and trifold doors to the patio and garden. The house is B2-rated with solar panels and a heat recovery system, and it measures 2,257 sq ft in all.



Cedar Lodge, Newtown Road

€565k DNG REID & COPPINGER (051) 852 233

There are some nice views of the River Suir from the back of Cedar Lodge, a cedar-clad detached house at Newtown Road, about 20 minutes' walk from the city centre. Measuring 2,799 sq ft on two floors, it has three bedrooms upstairs, all ensuite. Another two bedrooms are downstairs, one of them fitted out as a study. Also on the ground floor are three reception rooms — sitting room, dining room, and living room — along with a marble-fitted kitchen and a sunroom. Out the back is a sizeable raised deck with steps down to a lawned garden with hedging and shrubs.



23 Strandside South, Dungarvan

€550k BRIAN GLEESON PROPERTY (058) 44200;

SHERRY FITZGERALD REYNOLDS (058) 23444

Formerly a clinic (Strandside Medical Centre), No23 Strandside South has commercial zoning. It would make a wonderfully-situated family home in the heart of town on the Abbeyside bank of the Colligan River. It's 2,476 sq ft on two floors and as it's currently laid out, it has reception rooms, offices and a waiting room on the ground floor, and the same upstairs, along with a kitchenette. The rooms have nice period features, including sash windows and panelled doors. There's also a toilet on each floor. The grounds are made over to parking, with three entrances.

Kilnahinch, Moate, Co Westmeath €595k



Reception rooms to the fore at sprawling Moate five-bed

The railway station at Moate, Co Westmeath, might have ceased to be of service to rail passengers on the Dublin-Galway line, but it has made itself useful in other, unlikely ways.

Back in 1978, the railway station was a location in the filming of *The Great Train Robbery*, starring Donald Sutherland and Sean Connery.

Then, after its eventual closure in 1987 (and despite repeated calls to reopen it) the station became part of the Dublin-Galway Greenway cycling route.

What this means is that while you can no longer take a train from Moate to Galway or Dublin, you can cycle at least some of the way. More practically, the town is just three kilometres north of the M6 (Junction 6), which means you can drive from there to the M50 in about an hour.

This detached house is on the outskirts of Moate in the townland of Kilnahinch, about a kilometre from town. Built in the late 1990s,

it sprawls over 4,096 sq ft on two floors in a roughly L-shaped footprint, with most of the living rooms on the left-hand side of the house towards the west and south.

These consist of three main reception rooms all to the left of the entrance hall. First is a lounge at the front with a bay window and fireplace. Behind this is a sitting room that gives on to a conservatory with patio doors. Towards the back of the house then is a living room, and this opens into the rear kitchen-diner, which is dual-aspect and also has patio doors

That's not all the reception rooms though. There's also a separate dining room next to the kitchen and an office to the front on the right. The first floor has five bedrooms around a gallery landing, two of them ensuite.

The agent is Sherry FitzGerald O'Meara (0906) 475 500 and the asking price is €595,000.



The property in Kilnahinch measures 4,096 sq ft and (left) one of the reception rooms