

HOUSE OF THE WEEK



Orchard Field in Co Cork is ripe for the picking at €1.25 million

Architect-designed five-bed property close to Ballincollig has a mature feel and is set on an acre of landscaped grounds complete with a greenhouse and polytunnel, writes **Valerie Shanley**

Buyers in the market for the good life this coming spring could find their dreams realised with the Orchard Field. A ten-minute drive from Ballincollig, outside the parish of Inniscarra, Co Cork, this modern, detached country residence, built in 1994, feels like a much longer established home nestling in its rural setting. Sheltered by mature broadleaf trees and living up to its arboreal name, the house sits amid an acre-plus of well-tended, landscaped grounds that include a charming mix of woodland, wildflower meadow, lawns and vegetable gardens complete with a greenhouse and polytunnel.

THE ORCHARD FIELD, CURRALEIGH, INNISCARRA, CO CORK

Price: €1.25 million

Beds: five

BER: C1

Agent: McCarthy & McGrath Auctioneers

oak and maple floors in living areas and in the showstopper kitchen with its feature wooden beams and hand-painted timber cabinetry. An abundance of light throughout is enhanced in full height windows plus french-style doors opening directly to the lush gardens and also to glazed balconies giving uninterrupted views.

Designed by award-winning architect Margaret Walsh, she also collaborated on an extensive makeover of the split-level residence in 2008. The extension includes that wrap-around balcony off the now larger open-plan living area on the middle level, plus a ground floor master bedroom en suite with access directly to a sheltered patio. The house now spans a generous 315 square metres across its three levels.

The approach to the property is through electric gates and along the drive towards a large, paved area with a turning circle and double garage.

The entrance signals the space and light throughout with a bright and airy reception hall with a tiled floor. Leading off is the owner's studio. This is a feelgood workspace further enhanced by glimpses of the garden from a set of French-style doors out onto a south-facing terrace. Double doors also open to the garden from the inner hall. The heart of the house is the extensive dine-in kitchen and also the open-plan living room with its dual aspect glazing and balcony. This large room is kept cosy on cooler days with two feature solid-fuel stoves.

Also on this level is a fully tiled shower room and a utility.

On the lower level is the master bedroom en suite with doors to the terrace, and a second bedroom with separate bathroom. On the top level are three further bedrooms (one en suite) and a fully tiled bathroom with bath and shower. There is gas-fired central heating throughout, and the property comes with a C1 BER.

The location offers the ideal country retreat, yet is within just 20 minutes' drive from Cork city centre. Aside from the outdoorsy delights of the house and gardens itself, new owners will have an array of watersports to choose from nearby including the Inniscarra Sailing and Kayaking Club, and the Cork Powerboat and Waterski Club. Within easy reach is the Muskerry Golf Club, and the Inniscarra Community Centre – a c45-acre facility including the local GAA, Camogie Club, Muskerry Rudby Club, pitch and putt course, playground and community hall.

The Orchard Field is for sale guiding €1.25 million through McCarthy & McGrath Auctioneers at 021-4273800



The Orchard Field, Curraleigh, Inniscarra, Co Cork: the modern, detached country residence, built in 1994, feels like a much longer established home nestling in its rural setting



Kilmainham Congregational Church: last year, agent Owen Reilly achieved €960,000 for the church built around 1814 by Obadiah Willans

Tough year for renters with inflation up to 16 per cent

BY TINA-MARIE O'NEILL

Dublin-based agent Owen Reilly has released its annual report on the Dublin residential market based on data from the transactions it undertook in 2022. While supply issues continue and demand remains strong, the agent's residential market outlook is one of uncertainty.

According to Owen Reilly, it was very much a year of two halves as events again took over with Russia invading Ukraine causing an energy crisis and inflation to surge.

"The first six months were very much a seller's market with low supply, low interest rates, a strong local economy underpinned by a booming technology sector, and pent-up demand caused by the pandemic," said Reilly in the report.

In April, when the supply of properties for sale reached a record low, the agent's average selling prices were 7.6 per cent above asking and more than 80 per cent of its properties were sold above asking. Demand was strongest for family homes in turn-key condition, some of which were selling 20 per cent above asking in a matter of weeks.

"In the second half of 2022

price inflation cooled due to a significant increase in the supply of properties for sale with many sellers attracted by the price their neighbours achieved, interest rates started increasing, sentiment was somewhat negatively impacted by economic uncertainty and there were job losses in the technology sector with fears of a major correction," said the report.

Last year, on average, property prices in the company's core markets were 5 per cent higher than a year ago. Our average selling price was €643,891. Average selling prices were 4.6 per cent above asking prices and 68 per cent of its properties were agreed above asking.

In the rental market, the crisis continues, with the supply of rental accommodation coming nowhere near meeting demand and no sign it will any time soon. One huge challenge for the rental market is the reduced demand from investors. They accounted for 25 per cent of Owen Reilly's buyers in 2022 compared to 31 per cent in 2021 and 54 per cent in 2018.

Given more than half of the company's sellers were landlords exiting the market and most of its buyers were owner occupiers, the amount of available rental stock con-

tinues to deplete, as it has for the last five years, deepening the crisis.

According to the agent, the reasons there is less demand from investors are the same – many are selling up; rent control, taxation, regulation and concerns that more intervention from the state is on the way with no thought for the unintended consequences. Inflation is running much higher than the 2 per cent landlords can increase rents, reducing landlord returns.

"Our average monthly rent was €2,606, a 20 per cent increase on 2021," said O'Reilly. "Open market rental inflation for the year was +16 per cent, a depressing statistic and confirms the state's complete failure in the housing sector. "Given the uncertainty, the prospects for the selling market in Dublin in 2023 are very unclear despite strong underlying demand and fundamentals. As always, different property types and price ranges will perform very differently."

The full report includes a breakdown of buyer and tenant profiles, their nationality, occupation, gender and status and quarterly analysis on average rents, tenant salaries and their age profile.

For more see: owenreilly.ie

How to pass the interior design challenge with flying colours

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rugs combined with slate and stone floors add depth and moody character to your spaces. Where possible, I have always incorporated natural materials into design schemes for their quality, longevity and anti-allergy qualities.

Natural, textured materials can be layered to finish up a cosy living area, complete an inviting library space or a dreamy guest bedroom. Consider grasscloth wallpaper, timber floors, wool rugs, and cotton or linen upholstered furniture teamed with leather occasional pieces and ottomans.

Music or craft room

Most of us had no option but to find and create a space in our home from which to work over the past couple of years. As most people make the shift back to the office or workplace, now is an opportune time to convert that vacant space and put it to use for enjoyment purposes.

Consider transforming what was your work space or room into a music, crafts or hobby room or a space for yoga, relaxation and wellness. A home project for 2023 to transform a room within the home into a space you look forward to escaping into and that has a set use for hobbies you love to engage in.

Mood-enhancing schemes

Every room in the house should lift your spirits in some sense; bedrooms are for relaxing in and playrooms should be filled with activity and learning.

When designing rooms that you intend on entertaining in, consider the finer details that will set the tone for your guests and add a little intrigue.



Grasscloth wallpaper can add depth and texture to a room



Natural, textured materials make for a relaxing bedroom

Lighting, finishes, textures, decorative mirrors and details such as trimmings and embellishments are really important within these inviting spaces. Consider brass and glass light fittings with dimmer switches to set the mood lighting on the ceiling



Dramatic lighting, like this glass and steel pendant from Ruth Noble, adds atmosphere



Cosy blush pink tones in the kitchen cabinetry are echoed throughout the apartment

and edgings for curtains and upholstery.

Ruth Noble Interiors was established in Dublin in 2016. Noble has worked as an interior designer at an international level for more than 15 years. She sources furniture and art globally for

residential and commercial clients and developers. Ruth Noble Interiors specifies and supplies all furniture, fabric, wallpaper, rugs and lighting within projects. Noble also recently launched an online store. See: ruthnobleinteriors.com or follow on Instagram: @ruthnobleinteriors