



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

From left: study with built-in bookcases and access to the patio; living room with white marble fireplace and French doors to the terrace and barbecue area; kitchen/breakfast room with cream hardwood cabinetry, marble-topped island and Aga range

# Stunning country home echoes fine history of its setting within renowned Kilkenny estate

This impressive, detached four-bedroom home built at breathtaking Mount Juliet perfectly reflects the Georgian origins of the famous location, writes **Valerie Shanley**

‘What’s in a name?’ asks the famous Shakespeare quote. Back in the mid-18th century, the Earl of Carrick, Somerset Hamilton Butler, a descendant of the Anglo-Norman Butler family, deliberated for some time on this question. His fine Manor House had just been constructed in all its architectural glory, with the surrounding demesne of over 500 acres either side of the Nore River at Thomastown, Co Kilkenny, developed as rolling parkland. But what to call it?

The answer couldn’t have been closer to home. He decided on Juliet – not after the eponymous heroine of the Bard’s play, but his soon-to-be wife, Lady Juliana Boyle. And so, the quintessential country estate of Mount Juliet was created.

At the first mention of the name these days, the immediate association for many is the luxury five-star hotel in the original 1750s Georgian Manor House, overlooking the river and Ballylinch Stud. For others, it’s golf. The 18-hole course, designed by Jack Nicklaus, is world renowned, and the venue for several prestigious international tournaments over the past three decades, including the Irish Open.

The story of Mount Juliet doesn’t end there, of course, especially for owners of country homes in this historic setting. In the past two decades, more than 90 new properties have been built on the sprawling estate, ranging from apartments to detached houses. One of these is No 18 Foxes Covert.

This detached four-bedroom house, designed by Arthur Hickey of Kilkenny-based CCH Architects, echoes the Georgian origins of the estate, complete with portico entrance, large picture windows, landscaped grounds of over an acre and uninterrupted views of the



18 Foxes Covert extends to a generous 305-plus square metres, sitting on landscaped grounds of over an acre

countryside beyond. The interior of the house, a generous 305.7 square metres, is as impressive as its location, with double doors interconnecting ground-floor rooms and also opening directly to the private rear terrace.

The front double doors open into a large, elegant reception hall with hardwood floor and a staircase sweeping up to the galleried landing. Natural light fills the space, with extensive glazing surround-

ing the doors, a picture window opposite and a feature landing window above. The hall extends to an L-shape; at one end is the split-level living room with white marble fireplace and French doors out to the terrace and barbecue area.

At the rear of the house is the spacious kitchen/breakfast room with cream hardwood cabinetry, large central marble-topped island and cream Aga range. Adjacent is the utility, fully fitted with cream presses and sink. The kitchen

opens directly to the conservatory-style dining room, with an atrium ceiling and bathed in light from a full height, sweeping semi-circle of windows. At this level is the first of the bedrooms, a spacious double with walk-in wardrobe and en suite shower room. A large study with built-in bookcases and doors to the patio, and a guest cloakroom and WC complete the accommodation at entrance level.

Up on the first floor is the master bedroom with a separate dressing room and

en suite bathroom. There are two further double bedrooms, both en suite and both with deep-set picture windows, two of which open on to small, railed balconies. Underfloor heating is installed throughout the ground floor, with modern radiators in upstairs rooms.

No 18 is approached along a private, tree-lined driveway which curves around to a double garage and storage area and provides plenty of parking for several cars.

The grounds are not overlooked, with their west-facing sun terraces at the rear leading on to the landscaped gardens with meadow beyond.

A key selling point is the location, within walking distance of the Manor House, restaurants and all the diverse amenities available on the estate.

Outdoor pursuits include horse riding and tuition at the equestrian centre, salmon and trout fishing in the River Nore, an archery range and, for those inclined to try the sport of kings, there is even a falconry experience. The leisure centre has a 15-metre heated swimming pool and offers a range of spa treatments. The simplest pleasure of all could be just to follow in the footsteps of the original lords and ladies who traversed these many walks and nature trails along the banks of the river.

The Mount Juliet estate is about 1.5 km northwest of the N9 Dublin to Waterford Road, and convenient to Thomastown mainline train station. Kilkenny is within a 20-minute drive, and Mount Juliet is 30 minutes from Waterford, and just over an hour from Dublin.



The open-plan kitchen/dining room at the rear of the house opens out on to the patio and south-facing garden; the TV room on the first floor is suitable for a range of alternative uses



# Stylish turnkey home on site of former monastery in thriving North city suburb

BY TINA-MARIE O’NEILL

Buyers on the hunt for a turnkey residence, boasting an A2 energy rating and more than 220 square metres of living space in a thriving, mature North Dublin suburb, your search may be over.

No 8 Hampton, a handsome, three-storey terraced townhouse, has come to market through Owen Reilly five years after construction and is in showhouse condition.

The pale brown-brick facade property is located off Grace Park Road in Drumcondra amid landscaped grounds and offers a host of features, including high-end fixtures and fittings, two driveway car park spaces with an EV charging point, a sunny, low-maintenance rear garden and bright, tastefully decorated interiors. All a new buyer need do is unpack.

The homes at Hampton were built on the grounds of Hampton House, which for 150 years was a Carmelite monastery until the order sold the lands for development in 2016. Before it was a convent, the house was known as Hampton Lodge and was home to Thomas Williams, the first secretary of the Bank of Ireland, and his wife Mary Ann Williams.

Set halfway up the row of terraces that make up Hampton, No 8’s smart navy front door opens to an entrance hall with semi-engineered pale timber floors and has access to the living room, kitchen and a guest WC with marble floors and Villeroy and Boch sanitary ware.

The living room to the left of the entrance overlooks the front drive. The same floors continue into this space, which has a contemporary enclosed fire with a Turkish limestone fireplace by Lammartine, trendy bottle-green walls, and a picture window with Venetian blinds.

Natural light fills the kitchen/dining room at the rear of the house through full-height, wall-to-wall sliding glass doors leading out to the south-facing garden.



8 Hampton, Grace Park Road is 4km from the city centre

Inside, the spacious kitchen comprises modern white base, wall-mounted and full-height units with marble worktops, a matching central island and a bespoke double dresser cabinet by Cawleys Furniture. Terratinta Ceramic tiles line the floor and there’s a full complement of integrated appliances. The room has ample space for a dining table and a couch and leads to a well-proportioned utility room with shelving, sink and a washing machine.

There’s another reception room on the first floor at the front and directly above the living room. Used as a TV room, but suitable for a range

of uses, the room has timber floors, deep teal-hued walls and Venetian window blinds. Laid in luxurious, stone-coloured carpets, the generous principal bedroom overlooks the rear garden and has a walk-in dressing room with fitted wardrobes, additional bespoke wardrobes by Cawleys in the bedroom proper, and a smart en suite with marble floor tiles, partially tiled walls and a double shower cubicle.

There are another three double bedrooms at the top of the house. All luxuriously fitted, they have carpeted flooring. Two have walk-in wardrobes. One has an en

suite shower room and the fourth has a bespoke, built-in shelving unit by Cawleys.

The well-appointed bathroom at this level has marble floors, partially tiled walls and a white suite, including a bath with an overhead shower.

The south-facing, professionally landscaped rear garden has a paved patio area, stepping stones, a raised flower bed, planted borders, a garden storage room and a low-maintenance faux lawn leading down to a high, natural stone wall.

There is a covered side passage leading to the front of the house, which overlooks a green space.

Grace Park Road is 4km north of Dublin city centre. Local amenities include the National Botanic Gardens, Croke Park, Dublin City University and a choice of good schools as well as a variety of eateries, bars, boutiques and shops.

City and national bus links are available in Drumcondra, while the main Richmond Road serves as one of the main arteries into the city centre and affords easy access to the M50, M1 and Dublin Airport.

An annual management fee of about €1,045 applies.

For more information or to arrange a viewing, contact the agent at 01-6777100.

# Fine exemplar of 1940s Art Moderne design

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wainscoted oak entrance doors open to a spacious entrance lobby with original timber floors and a beautiful, sweeping staircase that is twinned with a signature curved window which floods the entire space with natural light and sets the tone for what follows.

There is also a bespoke, concave hardwood hall table built into the sensual curve of the staircase. A Beaux Arts bronze figurine plays host at the bottom of the staircase and illuminates the hall.

To the left of the entrance lobby is a generous study with an original Art Deco-style ceramic fireplace, surrounding a wood-burning stove, flanked by matching bookcases on either side.

A bright passage hall on the left leads to a generous, dual-aspect living room with characteristic curved windows, and a marble fireplace designed by Christopher O’Neill & Sons of Carrickmines with recessed wood storage presses at either side.

Beside this room is a wonderful triple-aspect sunroom or loggia at the gable end of the house, with direct garden access and windows to the east, south and west.

To the right of the entrance lobby, double doors open into the large, formal dining room, complete with an original curved fireplace. The room has access to the kitchen with its original, duck egg blue Aga stove, which was used to both feed Fahanmura’s inhabitants and keep them warm.

Off the kitchen lies a cold larder, a utility room with a twin Belfast sink and access to an inner hall, which leads to the original maid’s quarters, garage and out to the gardens.

Upstairs there are four



Fahanmura has been open to the public since 2004

well-proportioned double bedrooms of which three have access to roof terraces, and a large family bathroom.

Quirky touches include the folding tray table on the first-floor landing, designed to bear the breakfast or tea tray carried up by the kitchen staff, and which folds flush with the wall when not in use. Another, associated feature is the staff call panel in the kitchen linked to the bell-push in each of the property’s nine rooms.

Outside, the gardens are mature and manageable and include well-tended lawns, mature specimen trees, an old fountain and raised terraces with rounded ends, echoing the curves of the house itself. The original tennis court could easily be reinstated.

Fahanmura is in need of some modernisation and has full planning permission (see dlrcoco.ie Reg Ref D20A/0536) to refurbish, improve and extend, offering a new owner the opportunity to remodel and reconfigure the property to suit their own needs and create a one-of-a-kind family home.

“It took a long time to find approved double-glazed

windows that ensured the steel profiles were exact,” said Paul.

“Also, a full [external insulation] wrap has been approved for the house, which is unusual for a listed house, but Fahanmura has a poured concrete, smooth finish, so the insulated finish remains the same,” he said.

The house has also been open to the public since 2004 under Section 482 of the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997, which provides tax relief to the owner/occupier of an approved building for costs incurred by its repair, maintenance or restoration.

Located just off the N11, the house is close to local shops in Foxrock Village and Cornelscourt and within easy reach of Stillorgan, Blackrock, Dundrum, Dún Laoghaire and Ballsbridge.

There are excellent schools, sports facilities and transport links nearby, including the N11 QBC, the Aircoach direct service to Dublin Airport and the M50.

“It is sad to move on, but I do hope the new owner will love the house as much as our family has,” said Paul.

Enquiries should be directed to John Coleman of Colliers at 01-6333700.