

# Magnificence at Maryborough

**Tommy Barker** says when it comes to quality, Kendal ticks all the boxes for master-craftsmanship

**P**HOTOGRAPHS can tell you a lot about a house, ever before you go to see it. But, they can't ever convey the full impression — they give the gloss but often not the heft, or the real feel of quality.

Seen here on its May sales launch with Malcolm Tyrrell of Cohalan Downing, Kendal absolutely looks the business in the images seen here; but, more importantly, it truly is the real deal, finished to exacting, master-craftsmanship levels, gratifying to see and to touch.

For anyone that bought, built, or upgraded a home in the past 10 or 15 years, there's both good and bad news when making comparisons with a house as good as Kendal.

First, the bad news: you've almost certainly lost out on the quality stakes: no matter how good or lucky you got with builders, it turns out they could have done better, finished better. Say 99.9% of modern houses simply couldn't hold their heads up in comparison, when pitched against this four-bed detached of understated comfort and unflashy looks.

It is of course a hard enough thing to define 'quality', but after a trapeze through Kendal, you at least know you've experienced it, in the fabric and flesh.

“Weighing in at just over 3,500 sq ft and on a site of 0.9 of an acre, it comes to the upper echelons of Cork city's house market

Now — perversely — the 'good' news: it's priced at €1.75m, so everyone's sort of off the hook, with the knowing excuse that 'yep, budget wasn't an issue, and so you do get what you pay for.' Only, sometimes you get more than in other times, and here at Kendal, it seems the end result came as much from — or even more so — from the build crew's professional pride and abilities as from the owners' expectations.

Superbly built, Kendal is for sale for the first time, as the family who built it day-one are now downsizing. They had been living in the Paddocks, on Maryborough Hill, back in the late 1990s when they got wind that sites might be coming on stream here, and they

got in early.

Now, nearly 14 years on, Kendal has done its job of family rearing, college days are advanced and even winding up, and almost of a sudden, it's too big for its brood. Weighing in at just over 3,500 sq ft and on a site of 0.9 of an acre, it comes to the upper echelons of Cork city's house market as up to a half dozen top city homes jostle for buyers in the €1-2 million price bracket, in the likes of suburban Tivoli, Blackrock, and Douglas, and as confidence returns to the southern capital's homes market.

Last year, 2014 saw no sales at all in the city over €1m, but already there's been several €1m plus deals in 2015, with one, in Woodview, Douglas, making

€2.4m, on 1.5 acres. (Carrigrohane Castle quietly joined the fray last weekend, going on line without any fanfare for the O'Brien family who've owned it for four or five decades, likely to be priced at c €2.5m for its 6,500 sq ft, on 16 acres. That craggily-set castle, at the end of the Straight Road, has 400 years of history, and some recent years of a different sort of note, as the place where convicted fraudster Breifne O'Brien grew up.)

So, there's competition to be sure, but geographical differences will winnow out some of the bidders. Most likely, Kendal's immediate competition may come from the old guard and a period property offer, the Old Rectory, Douglas, launched last weekend in these pages via Savills, at €1.85m, on Carr's Hill, just around the hill and as handily set a walk into and from Douglas village.

Kendal is one of six, large, distinguished modern builds at Oakwood, the original approach avenue to the period Douglas House, now a high-end apartment and townhouses scheme done by Bride View around the old, Horgan family-owned period Douglas House.

Each one of these six one-offs is on large sites, too. One of the largest sites is by the entrance on Maryborough Hill, and it's where rugby legend Ronan O'Gara and his wife Jessica have their Cork family home.

Electric access gates are the norm in this setting, and Kendal has them too, to its sloping, south-west aspected 0.9 acre landscaped grounds.

House design was by architect Bill Brady, who's done a lot of Cork and Kinsale's most expensive builds in the past couple of decades, and here his trademark — bow windows — are back in evidence, easy on the eye, yet fiendishly difficult to manufacture.

The windows throughout were all made by top joiner Jim Barry in Waterfall, one of the best in the business for decades, and Mr Barry also did the staircase, floors, reveals, and doors, as well as wall panelling in the hall and stairwell, at one stage reworking the wall's panels until they lined up with the stair spindles, just so.

Floors at ground level are all American white oak, seemingly as



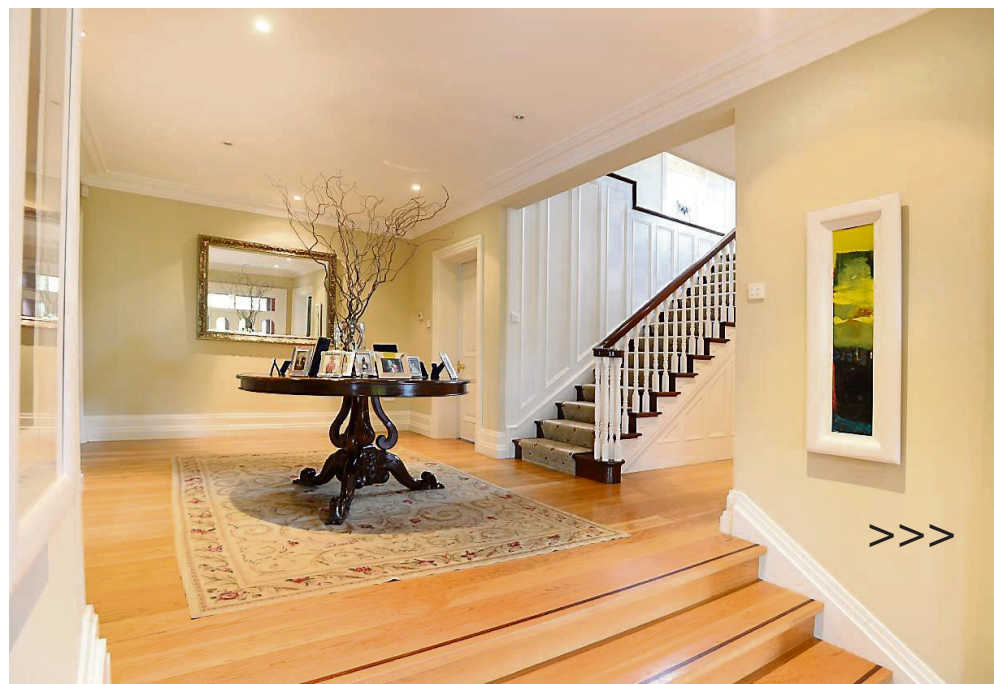
Maryborough Hill, Cork
€1.75 million
Sq m 330 (3,562 sq ft)
Bedrooms: 4
Bathrooms: 5
BER: D2
Best Feature: Quality, top to bottom



good and unmarked now as when put down 14 years ago, beginning past the entry vestibule in the 26' deep hallway, on a split level, with four steps between the front lower and the rear higher halves of the house.

Decor tends towards the classical look and the owner's keen to give credit to interior architect





Veronica Collins for her input and selection of materials for things like library shelving and other built-ins which made best use of the rooms.

To the right of the hall is a welcoming 24' by 20' lounge with dining area, all low key with pale blue walls, and an open, wide basket fireplace to an Adam design

in marble, with brass trim. This room has a double aspect, triple in fact, as the dining end picks up another window for light, and ceilings are coved with recessed lighting. Across the hallway is a living room, with large built-in bookcase, and it has another open fireplace.

If there's a touch of formal use to the front rooms — and they're still

relaxing and inviting, permanently open via wide cased arches (ie, no need for doors) — it's dialled back a bit as you progress to the rear of the house.

Up the four oak steps, with dark oak inlay strips, and past a circular display table, there's a well-laid out kitchen, as well as a family room through an open, square

arch. Most day-to-day family interaction is bound to centre around these linked and spacious rooms, each with French doors to the rear garden, terrace and west-facing side patio too. Again, flooring is all in American white oak, and units are made by Martin Kiely Kitchens, in painted hardwood, with granite tops on the units and

central island, while the island also has a scrubbed oak section for chopping and food prep.

There's a raft of built-in and integrated appliances, mostly De Dietrich, with gas hob, double ovens, double sinks, masses of storage and larder press — the works, and it all works.

As in the main rooms off the



