

HOUSE OF THE WEEK

Tommy Barker reports



BACK a few decades ago, when the mansard-roofed detached dormer Springmount was first built, it might have seemed a bit 'out in the sticks'. But, now — while it is still reached just after a charming rustic chicane bend in the road by Carrigrohane's Rocklodge — it seems as if many metaphorical roads are leading towards it.

It's a short, easy 10-minute strike from Ballincollig, where that satellite town's employment base has mushroomed in the past decade, thanks to employers like EMC, VMware and others in the redeveloped former military barracks.

And, as close again is the sprawling Apple campus up on the northside's Hollyhill, with its new extension, which is home to thousands of new jobs, and where more land is being acquired and added alongside for future, further development by the multi-national. Employees there won't fall or commute far from the lucrative Apple tree here at Springmount, easily reached via Kerry Pike and Healy Bridge, and it's also an easy commute to Cork's western suburbs, third level colleges, and hospitals.

So, given the location's strengths in spades, the selling agent of this four-bed 1,630 sq ft home on lovely gardens, Brian Olden of Cohalan Downing, can expect sharp minds, and keen eyes, to concentrate on this particular property offer in the next few weeks, in the run-up to back-to-school days.

"The early viewings are coming mostly from families and younger employees in companies like Apple, who are looking for a good family home and gardens, with a rural feel and privacy, but very close to work and to the city; the real bonus is the fact it is so accessible," stresses Mr Olden.

The family home, now a down-sizing sale, is no mean home either, and any new owners can simply walk in, furnish it and make changes as they see fit, and when they get used to it, rather than having to tackle jobs straight way - and that's another box ticker, adds the estate agent.

He says the road up to Rocklodge (near a pitch and putt club) is pleasant, and adds that the house has charm, with years of work and care gone into the 0.6 acre of gardens.

It's a very good mix of house and grounds, and it's well snuggled down into its grounds, which have a small slope away from the house which is skirted with shrubs: handily, there's a detached garage as well, for all sorts of storage and gardening needs: even the 23' by 15' garage has a cute sort of mansard roof on it, looking a bit like it's wearing a bonnet.

While it's not the biggest of houses right now at just over 1,600 sq ft, it still has good accommodation and comes with a ground floor en suite bedroom, making it highly adaptable for all ages, and then has three more overhead bedrooms.

The kitchen has a Shaker-style timber units, black granite tops, Neff appliances and a double aspect with garden views, and tiled floor.

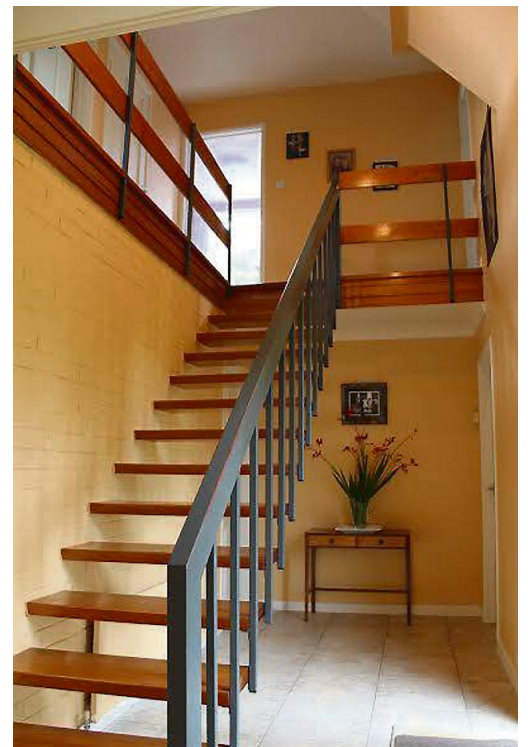
A lean-to sun room running 23' along a side wall has a floor tiled with black slates, good for soaking up the heat, and Sanderson blinds on the window and roof help to keep heat in after the sun goes down. Separately, there's a dining area, and a carpeted 15' by 11' living room which has a wood-burning stove integrated into the fireplace ope, with beaten copper canopy overhead.

The hall here is quite 1970s in looks thanks to the open tread stairs, with horizontal boards as balusters around the landing, and all three upstairs bedrooms are carpeted, and there's an upstairs WC, plus separate bathroom.

Maintenance levels have been good inside and outside.

VERDICT: Visited on a sunny day, the gardens will be a clincher: this is country living, made easy.

Carrigrohane, Cork
€425,000
Sq m 152 (1,630 sq ft)
Bedrooms: 4
Bathrooms: 3
BER: D2
Best feature: Grounds and location



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