

# Irish Examiner

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# Property

Ireland's best guide for people on the move



Barleyfield, Whitechurch, raises the bar for new developments all over the region.

Picture: Denis Scannell

## Shaking the barley

by Rose Martin

WHY Whitechurch? One of the freshest, most cutting edge housing estates hits the market this week in the hamlet north of Cork city.

And it could be said Barleyfield is hiding its light under a bushel — tucked away as it is in a rural village five miles from town.

The scheme is the brainchild of local landowners, Dan and Bláthnaid Buckley, who began developing on their own land some years ago.

Barleyfield is their latest scheme, but this time round they have gone for a high-end and expensive build.

Reddy O'Riordan Staehli, a highly-regarded and award-winning firm of architects were contracted for the design which puts the scheme head

and shoulders above others in the south. It's on a design par with the Sheen Falls lodges in Co Kerry, holiday homes with an average price in excess of €1m.

So why go to all the trouble? Because, perhaps, builders Dan Buckley Whitechurch (DBW) wanted to test their mettle, or because they take pride in their work? Either way, they've produced a scheme that will raise the bar for new developments all over the region.

There were teething problems, however, and the application went to An Bórd Pleanála, but now the first six houses in a planned, 29-unit scheme are well under way and the showhouse opens this weekend.

It is, as the brochure says, a new dimension in house-building.

According to Robert Harkin of Countrywide Homes, estates of solely, detached houses like Barleyfield, will no longer be allowed by council planners:

"There's nothing like this in the city or county and it's an estate of only detached residences with no mix of house types — it's what makes it different. And of course, the design and spec is way above average."

Developers, DBW, could have gone the cheaper route with a more generic design and a cheaper finish; instead, and fair dues, they've produced houses with an ideal, single-depth layout, with a number of aspects and a finish that combines the timelessness of stone, with a crisp, plaster finish.

Dormers, gutters and down pipes are zinc, while grounds are finished in

grey sandstone and stone walling. There has been an exacting attention to detail at Barleyfield and while the showhouse is ready, the bones of the other houses are on plan to see.

There are four types, the A, B and C and D and prices will range from €700,000 to €900,000 fully inclusive of a range of high-end fittings.

Robert Harkin is prepared to negotiate with prospective buyers and there will be a lot of flexibility in regard to finishes, but Barleyfield comes as a complete package, which the showhouse demonstrates.

It will open this weekend from 2.00pm to 4.30pm Saturday and Sunday only — from thereafter, it's strictly by appointment.

■ See also pages 20, 21.

### Change for the better



Much-changed house in a prime city suburban location is sure to impress the buyers. page 2

### Extension's a work of art



An extension with a difference puts an innovative Tralee home in a class of its own. pages 14, 15

### Wish you were here?



Pretty as a postcard property has the perfect setting in tranquil west Cork. pages 18, 19

Jennifer Dore  
Fiona Russell




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Evenings by appointment

## Rose Martin says Barleyfield is a benchmark for future developments



# Barleyfield's a benchmark for

**T**HEY'VE thought of everything at Barleyfield — from the clean cut, architectural design to outside taps.

At the Whitechurch, Co Cork scheme the list of inclusive fittings will not only gladden the hearts of full-finish buyers, but will remove the headaches that surround PC sums.

Dormers, gutters and down pipes are maintenance free zinc.

Stone dressing is Liscannor, with a tonal, grey sandstone used in the patios. And then, there are the windows, the specially imported Carlson brand, with high energy ratings.

There are four different house types in this scheme, which will be built in sixes, keeping disruption to a minimum and ensuring

landscaping and roads are finished for new owners.

The first six are on the way up now, with the showhouse open this weekend and thereafter by appointment.

The unit on show is the larger of the range, the A-type, and offers just under 2,500 square feet on two levels.

Its mass is cleverly broken up by gables, while the house

stretches back at the rear.

It follows the Cork Rural Design Guide in its single-depth design and has vernacular touches in the stone cladding — but with a very contemporary edge.

Architect for the scheme Peter Stacey of Reddy O'Riordan Staehli, (RORSA), says the impetus behind Barleyfield was to create something a buyer would want to build themselves.

“High clean lines are where we came from and the houses are traditional in the sense that they use simple materials. We've kept it informal, with broken up streetscapes and no repetition — and while we've followed the original field lines, quirky things still happen with the layout.

“Because it's in a village, we didn't want Barleyfield to feel like a suburb and wanted to keep the



# future developments

character of the place.”

By sticking to the single-depth approach, the houses have a number of aspects, so, no matter what the orientation, they have sunlight at various times of the day.

Timber-framed, to a higher than regulation spec, they also come with underfloor gas heating.

Finishes vary. The hallway of

the showhouse has a completely original, walnut staircase rising to the first floor, while this extra-high space can be sealed from the kitchen by a sliding walnut door. Elsewhere, there's a mix of oak, pine and painted, solid doors.

The formal living room is at the front, then comes the kitchen and the family room is at the rear.

The dining room is to the left

of the main hallway and has a wing to itself. Most rooms have French doors leading to the patio.

Overhead, and off a long, well-lit landing, there are a choice of master bedrooms, from the south/west room with three aspects at the front, to the stand-alone bedroom over the formal dining room at one side, and the official master at the gable end. Quality is superb, with

high-end ware, lighting and fittings, all included in the price. Two of the rooms come with dressing rooms and all five bedrooms have fitted robes, with some clever touches. Only one room is a single, and a large one at that. It's laid out as a study in the showhouse.

Beautifully finished, Barleyfield is a benchmark for future developments and Dan Buckley

Whitechurch builders are already half-way through another contemporary village scheme at Lavallin, on the other side of Whitechurch. Again, RORSA are the architects and both builds show not only foresight, but respect for buyers whose appetites run to more than 20th century design levels.

■ Pictures: Denis Scannell