

House of the week

DUBLIN 3 €425,000



We bought this house in September 2013. I grew up in Galway and Mayo, but lived in Clontarf when I was in college, as my brother was based there when he was manager of Clontarf Castle. I cycled the coast road to the city every day and fell in love with Clontarf. A few of my best friends are in the area and my wife, Mishka, who is from Cape Town, loves it, too – we both adore the sea.

Fortview needed work, but we didn't want a typical semi-detached house. We prefer to put our own stamp on things, rather than live in something someone else has already done. We also wanted to add value to a house of our own. No 1 dates from 1836 or 1837, but the farthest back we can trace its occupants is to 1911. The census that year lists a husband and wife and two lodgers from the country, all of whom were employed by CIE.

We started with simple cosmetic stuff such as lifting carpets, which confirmed that the house needed a complete overhaul. Around the stairwell, the original horsehair insulation was coming apart. We reinsulated the whole house, replastered and painted, and then installed wall panelling up through the stairwell. We felt it was a good way to restore the integrity of such an old house and bring all three floors together.

The ground floor layout feels like a period country home. There's a front room, then a middle room we use as a dining area and the kitchen. There are doors to the garden from two rooms, which is great for parties, as you get full circulation of the space. I would have installed french doors in the front room if we were staying.

We did all of the decorative work ourselves and spent a lot of time



going around showrooms and picking things out.

We also plumbed the whole house to a high standard and installed two large water tanks off the third bedroom that are solar-ready. We did a huge job on the

At a glance

No 1 Fortview Avenue, in Clontarf, an early 19th-century three-bedroom, three-storey home.

Best bits: A full renovation has been carried out and there is space to extend, subject to planning permission.

Owners: Padraig Staunton and Mishka Moody, directors of Happy Brands brand consultancy, and their newborn son, Cian.



Character study
No 1 Fortview Avenue, left, has been renovated inside and out, and now has stylish rooms with a country-house look, such as the living room, top left, and master bedroom, above right

main bathroom: it's well insulated, fully tiled, and has Hansgrohe fittings.

Two of the bedrooms are large. The master bedroom doesn't have built-in storage. As a result it is a bright, airy, space. The second bedroom has two large Sliderobes.

There is plenty of room for a rear extension, which had also been our plan. Some neighbours doubled the size of their house from about 1,000 sq ft to 2,000 sq ft, so there's a precedent. A site in Clontarf would cost more than this house alone, so it's loaded with potential.

We never intended to sell so soon, but, through our business, we have the opportunity to live in South Africa, where my parents also live, so Cian can spend time with his grandparents while he's so young. Then when he's a bit older, we'll pause the entrepreneurial life, come back and look for another old house in Clontarf.

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