

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

## More than €30m sought for Rathgar residential site

Marianella's 8.11 acres of grounds likely to accommodate up to 280 well-located homes



Marianella site is expected to appeal to investment funds as well as developers because of its primary location along Orwell Road - Jack Fagan

The extensive grounds of the Redemptorist community at Orwell Road in Rathgar, Dublin 6, are almost certain to be redeveloped for high value housing when they are sold shortly by private treaty.

Commercial agent WK Nowlan Property is to invite offers in excess of €30 million for the Marianella seminary, church and grounds which extend to 3.28 hectares (8.11 acres) and are likely to accommodate at least 280 homes.

The residential site is the largest and best located to have come on the market in over a decade and will be of particular interest because the current shortage of houses in the south inner city is driving prices outside the reach of many buyers.

The Redemptorists, who have been based at Marianella since 1919, announced in 2007 that they planned to sell part of the grounds and build a smaller monastery on site. This plan was subsequently scrapped because, according to the order, “our circumstances have changed considerably in recent years and brought us to the present position”.

Vocations to the priesthood have fallen off dramatically and the Marianella community now has 12 members.

“Like most religious orders,” the Redemptorists said, “we are confronted by a future with fewer vocations and our communities are home to predominantly elderly confreres who are in need of support and care. At the same time we want to respond positively to the times we live in by remaining true to our charism of sharing the good news with the poor and most abandoned.” The order said the funds generated by the sale would be used to ensure that the work of the Redemptorists continued in Ireland, especially with the support of lay co-workers, and that they would be able to further develop the support of their missions overseas, especially their new mission in Mozambique.

The Marianella site is expected to appeal to investment funds as well as developers because of its primary location along Orwell Road, where it has two entrances. A gate lodge at one of the entrances is the only building listed for preservation. The grounds adjoin St Luke’s Hospital, which may eventually be closed down. The St John of God Hospital is located along another frontage.

When the Redemptorists previously moved to sell part of the grounds, they secured planning approval until November 2017 for a mixed development of apartments and houses with a gross floor area of 27,220sq m (292,996sq ft). The scheme was to have included 12 five- bedroom semi-detached houses and 199 apartments, most of them two and three- bedroom homes. There was also provision for a crèche and 303 car parking spaces. More than a quarter of the overall site (0.92 hectare/2.28 acres) was set aside for a monastery building extending to 4,826sq m (51,951 sq ft).

With the monastery no longer required, the likelihood is that whoever buys the overall site will opt for an entirely new planning concept, with considerably more houses than apartments to meet the current demand.