

€30m? There goes

How five families hatched a secret pact to get rich quick and sell the entire street...

A GROUP of neighbours have made an extraordinary pact to sell their homes collectively in a deal which could net them €30million.

The deal would more than double the amount the houses would fetch if sold individually.

The inhabitants of Sunnyhill Park, a cul-de-sac just off the N11 near Cabinteely on Dublin's southside, have banded together and put their properties up for sale as one 5.7-acre lot so they can be demolished and redeveloped.

The five detached homes, which all have large gardens, would normally expect to sell for €3m each. But Lisney, which is handling the sale, is expecting to receive offers of at least €30m for the combined site, which as well as opening onto the N11 has access to the M50 Motorway and the proposed Luas line extension which is expected to be open within five years.

Lisney points out that the lot would be a prime site for a 'high-density residential scheme' - estate agent-speak for high-rise office and apartment blocks.

The unique arrangement between the householders, one of whom is an accountant, is said to have been negotiated before they approached any estate agents about the sale.

So close is their bond, that the families involved - the Davitts, O'Dwyers, Connollys,

By **Kate Chambré**

O'Mearas and Nolans - have also all agreed a vow of silence over the deal.

Several houses in the estate yesterday had their curtains drawn and no-one answered their doorbells.

Maurice Davitt, one of the residents, said: 'All of the neighbours have collectively decided not to speak on the matter. If you want to find out anything further contact Lisney.'

But neighbours living directly behind the cul-de-sac have expressed concern over

'They'll get their pound of flesh'

the impact a major development would have on wildlife. One resident, who asked not to be identified, living behind Sunnyhill Park at Beech Park, an estate which is also set for major development, said yesterday that wildlife would soon be non-existent in the area.

She also questioned where children moving to new apartments in the area would be able to attend school, given the 'long waiting lists' in the locality.

'The development is going to have a devastating effect on wildlife. We have foxes, badgers, owls, squirrels, and an abundance of rich wildlife here. I grew up around here, and it has always been rich

with animals.' She said it would soon be a case of them having to adapt to the urban sprawl or die out completely.

'The ironic thing is that the selling point for residential development at Sunnyhill Park and Beech Park is its abundance of wildlife.'

'But in reality this will all soon be gone. It's sad to think that this area used to be countryside and now it's more like Stillorgan.'

And Herbert Geoghegan, who lives next door to Sunnyhill Park said: 'I'm not pushed with what they do to Sunnyhill Park; they're obviously looking to get their best pound of flesh out of it. Beech Park was sold in the same way.'

However, another resident said that people were 'secretly happy' so much development was going on because it would add further value to their properties.

'Some of my neighbours are happy because their property will be worth much more because of all the development that's going on. It means they can cash in and move on.'

'I, on the other hand, am loath to it because it means the community spirit will totally disappear in the area.'

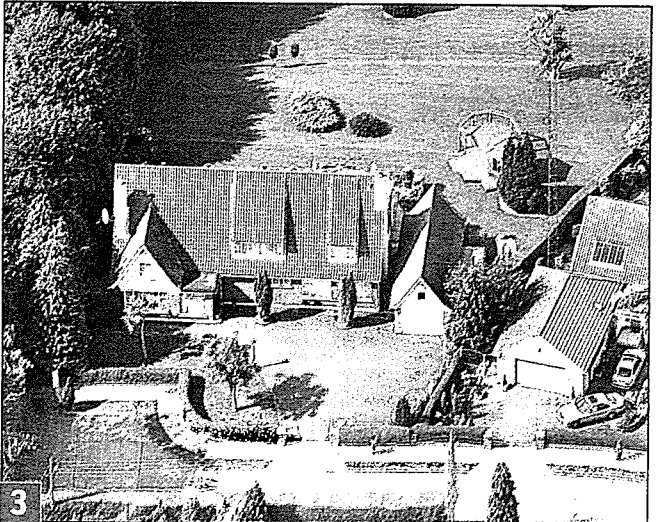
Lisney said yesterday that it had been asked by Sunnyhill Park not to comment on the sale. However, its promotional literature says that the site has 'the potential for a quality signature high density residential scheme'.



Scurlock: Owned by Aidan O'Dwyer, this house is tucked just off the N11



Sheevawn House: Noel Connolly owns this property with a tennis court to the rear



Carrabawn: Brian O'Meara keeps his lawn immaculate but it will soon be bulldozed

€3.5m sale of gospel hall is a 'plundering'

By **Sandra Murphy**

PROPERTY tycoons were accused of plundering the country's religious heritage last night, after a gospel hall in Dublin was sold for an estimated €3.5m.

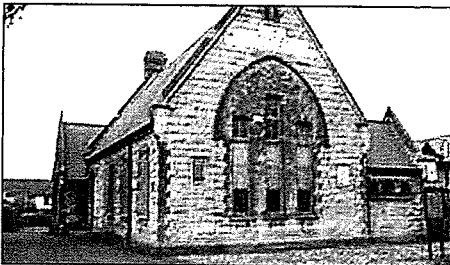
Critics said the sale of Irish-town Gospel Hall in the prestigious Dublin 4 area was tantamount to making their neighbourhood a 'soulless concrete jungle for greedy land developers.'

The likes of Bono and Irish artist Guggi attended the church's Sunday school.

The multi-million euro deal for the 1862 church was agreed over the last few days and the building was sold for commercial purposes.

But conservationist Damien Cassidy hit out at the Department of the Environment for allowing the building boon to impinge on the preservation of religious sites in Ireland.

'Every bloody square inch of Dublin is being taken over by property developers, and they are being turned into a



Iristown Gospel Hall: Bono's and Guggi's Sunday school

business man's paradise,' he said.

'They are now allowed to take over religious buildings and build blocks of flats.'

'We need a heritage body with more power to stop this from happening. All of these multi-denominational halls have a sacred function and cannot be allowed to just be bought up.'

'They acted as a worship place for long, long periods of

time in the past, and they should be allowed to remain in the function.'

Mr Cassidy, chairman of the Ringsend Environmental Group, warned it wasn't just Protestant halls that were under threat from developers.

'The Jewish Synagogue on Dublin's Adelaide Road, which even got a mention in James Joyce's Ulysses, was sold and made into office blocks,' he said.

the neighbourhood

LOOK CLOSELY BECAUSE THIS DUBLIN CUL-DE-SAC WILL SOON BE DEMOLISHED



No.5: Simple title but this number's a lucky one for owners Patrick and Carmel Nolan



Skeldon: Maurice Davitt is keeping his end of the pact - he's staying tight-lipped