

THURSDAY OCTOBER 27 2016

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HOME *Style*

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The Gallery is Belfast's new masterpiece

One of the reasons why a new multi-million pound development consisting of almost 60 luxurious apartments on Belfast's Dublin Road is named The Gallery is because world-renowned artists and famous poets had lived and worked in the area.

No doubt they would be impressed by The Gallery's artistic vision and direction. The first development of its kind in the city in nearly a decade, the building is defined by its attention to detail with a clever design to ensure plenty of light streams through to illuminate the quality of finish in each and every one of its 58 apartments. Due to be completed by December, Gary McCausland, the chief executive of Richland Group who are behind the project, believes the scheme, which employed 300 people, offers a unique opportunity.

"The scheme is targeted at investors looking for good rental returns, first-time buyers, young professionals and possibly students or their parents interested in making a wise investment," Mr McCausland said.

"It's very much a high quality city pad scenario that's based on minimum maintenance and good value for money, it will appeal to lots of sectors. Entry level is at £115,000 which for a brand new apartment in the city centre represents a great buying opportunity. "There have been no new apartments built in Belfast in eight-nine years and we just believe the time in the cycle is right, confidence is returning and people."

Located at the midpoint of the Belfast art scene, halfway between the Cathedral Quarter and the Ulster Museum, for years the Dublin Road has been a focal point for world-renowned artists. From William Conor, Paul Henry and Gerard Dillon to the poetry of Richard Rowley, who was born and raised just a few doors down, art in all its forms played a large part in shaping this area.

The Gallery not only offers nine floors of modern, New York/Tokyo inspired living, but the public and common spaces will showcase original art from the new wave of talent coming through Ulster University's Art School, creating a permanent exhibition.

The 4,000 square foot ground floor space will be occupied by a café-bar with six metre high floor to ceiling windows and an outdoor seating area, providing a new meeting point for the artists of today.

The Gallery provides a contemporary living aesthetic accented by clean lines, reflective surfaces to maximise light with clever functional layout and design integrating services and storage. With a ground floor cafe/bar due to open in spring, Mr McCausland believes this is a key component of the enterprise.

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Belfast artistry on show in The Gallery

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“St Anne’s Square has shown what can be done, and it’s been a huge success. Obviously we are also complying with all the environmental and sound-proofing regulations which are much more stringent than even five years ago. We’ll also have a sub-air systems which provides clean fresh-air without having to open any windows. Young professionals, first-time buyers, students and investors, all want to be in the thick of it in city centres and that’s borne out by all the international research. That’s why we’re going for that at ‘The Gallery’. The scheme is a mixture of one-bed or two-bed and we’ll have some penthouse apartments. They’ll all have the same high quality finishes, all to a very high standard bang in the heart of Belfast.”

Roger Wilson Design Studio, based just outside Belfast, has designed a number ‘be-spoke’ interior furniture packages that complement the design and specification of The Gallery, comprising from high-end luxury to more basic robust solutions for investors.

The apartments have a front door onto the main street and side door access off Ventry Lane with direct access for those with bicycles. The stately proportions of the lobby

with full height glazed sections and contemporary artwork highlight the city and the environs of the development in colour and with style.

With lift access to the eight floors of apartments, lifts are large enough for bicycles and the mezzanine level provides dedicated bicycle storage and lockers, making urban living easier for cross-city travel. Each apartment is accessed from a well-lit carpeted corridor with dedicated lighting at the individual apartment entrances.

The exterior is finished in high quality render and all windows and doors are made from powder-coated, double-glazed aluminium. The two-bedroom apartments on the 8th and 9th floors feature terraces with stainless steel and glass balustrades.

The contemporary door opens into each apartment where a stylish tiled floor leads to the main living space to overlook city life on the Dublin Road through the floor-to-ceiling picture window complete with integral blinds for added privacy. Integrated lighting provides a range of mood light settings.

The kitchen area with sleek lines and proportions is surrounded with a tiled splash back, gloss finished doors, built-in oven, fridge freezer, microwave, dishwasher, hob and

washing machine-tumble dryer.

The one-bedroom apartments lend themselves well to incorporating a double bed and bedside units. The rooms will have built-in sliding mirrored wardrobes and there will be an opaque glazed backdrop to the bed space providing natural light through the adjoining living space. The bathroom is fully tiled with a wall hung WC, and shower over bath. We’ve all grown up watching Hollywood films and sitcoms in which the main protagonists enjoy modern living in the heart of their respective cities overlooking the skyline, wondering, dreaming even, if we could do just that. Now you can, and you don’t have to traverse the Atlantic to do it. But with 50 per cent of apartments sold already, time is of the essence.

In terms of the long term, Mr McCausland says the development is a big vote of confidence for Belfast. “We’re using all local people. We’re not going outside of Northern Ireland for any of the kit. I think it’s a massive vote of confidence in Belfast and the potential Belfast has. We think the uptake will be positive. The interest shown already has been phenomenal, and that will grow especially when more people get to read what’s it’s all about.” For more information visit the gallerybelfast.com.



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- Gary McCausland, Richland Group CEO

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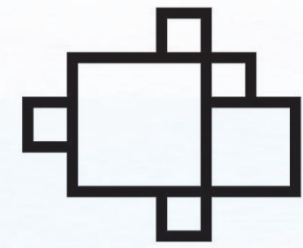
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