

Of these 29 were awarded a "commended", "highly commended" or "winner" in various categories.

"The others fell by the wayside because, when we visited them, they didn't live up to their promise. In some of them the presentation photos oversold them and in other cases the drawings and graphics oversold them," says O'Connor.

"On some very large projects people had been put under too much pressure to do things quickly and there was a lack of finesse and level of detailing."

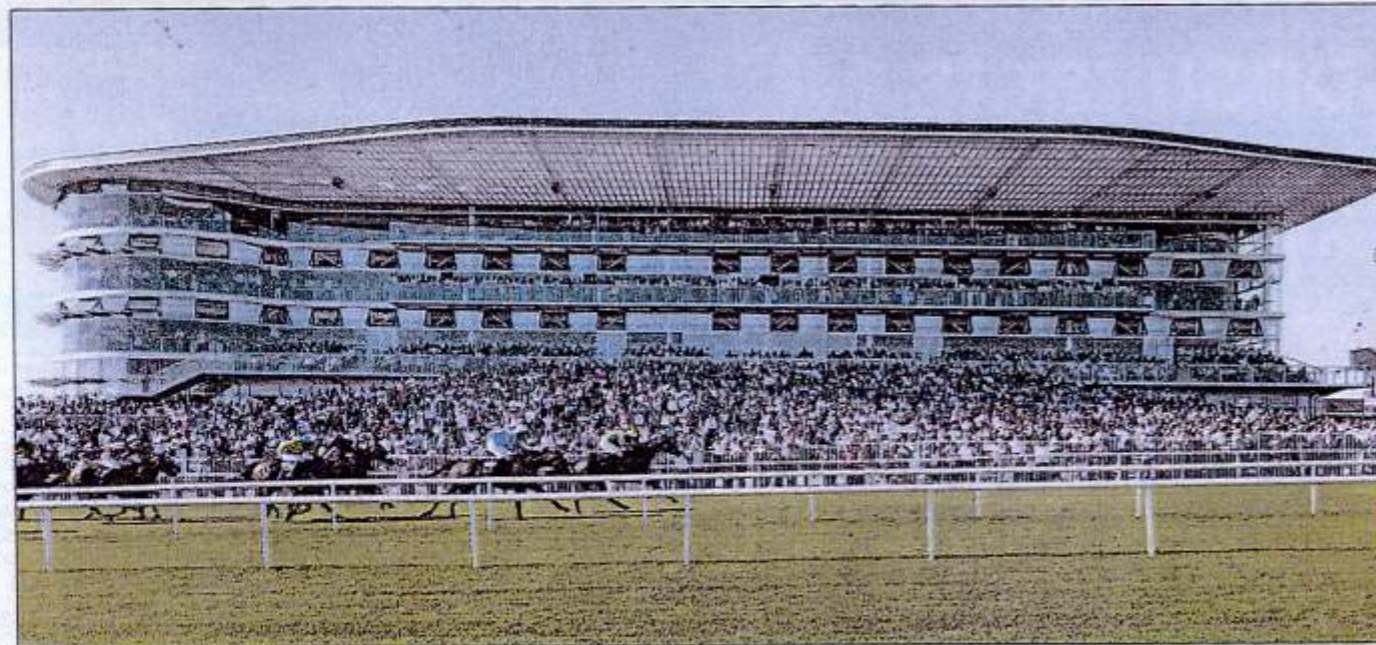
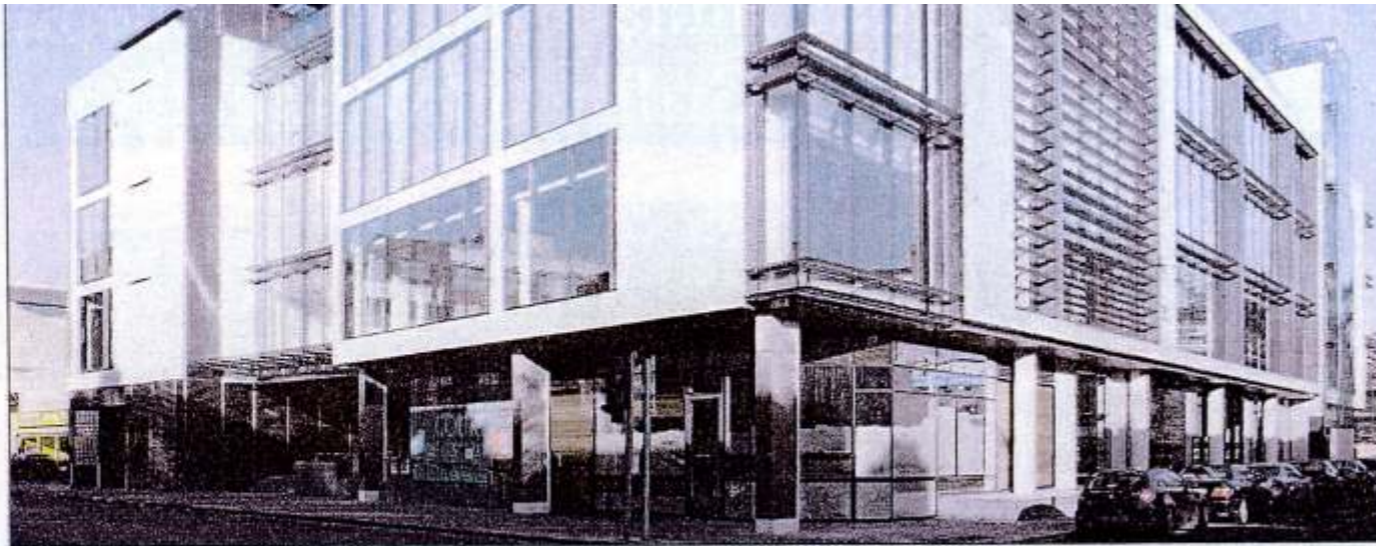
One of the smaller commercial project winners was the Fuse graphics studio by Box Architecture.

"This was an excellent piece of small scale work, shown in the way the architects manipulated the light and met the brief requirements of the owners, even though it was done on a shoestring," says O'Connor.

The judges were pleased at the number of heritage buildings that were being returned to Ireland in a good state.

Carton House Hotel and Spa by Murray O'Laoire and Piersie Contracting was one of these, even though the judges nearly didn't visit it because they felt the presentation was lacking.

WHEN they walked around it they realised that the submissions had not done it justice. While there was a hotel bedroom addition we didn't like, the rest of it was very assured. The original old house is not in Ireland's top 10 but we did feel that a good part of our history had been well handled. Often the landscape in such projects is butchered but here it was treated well and such parkland is rare in the large houses of Ireland," says O'Connor.



Clockwise from top left: George's Court, Townsend Street, Dublin 2 by KMD Architecture/G&T Crampton Ltd was an 'award winner' in the 'over €10m' category; the interior of Carton House Hotel & Spa, Maynooth, Co Kildare by Murray O'Laoire Architects/Piersie Contracting Ltd was an 'award winner' in the 'heritage' category; Fuse Graphics, 30B Lennox, 27A Sygne St, D8 by Box Architecture Ltd/Irish Conservatories Ltd was an 'award winner' in the 'under €1 million' category; the interior of Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin by Cantrell & Crowley Architects/McNamara & Co Ltd was an 'award winner' in the 'heritage' category; Killanin Stand, Ballybrit, Co Galway by EPR Architects/Michael McNamara & Co Ltd was 'highly commended' in the 'over €10m' category

...to be in an architectural manner. They have honed the skills over a number of years and that shows in the calibre of finish and level of detail and that is surprising in a building done by a developer. The fact that Hanover Quay met its social housing requirements was a plus," says O'Connor.

The judges were pleasantly surprised when they visited the offices at George's Court in Townsend Street, Dublin 2 by KMD Architecture and G&T Crampton Ltd. "The attention to detail is very good. Often that type of development is restricted by taking a one-suit-fits-all approach but this scheme went much further in providing flexibility. There was a lot of architectural effort put into the quality of finish internally. We felt some elements of the elevation were overmodelled but, in overall terms of addressing the problem, the result achieved was to a high standard," says O'Connor.

The Killanin Stand for the Galway races by EPR Architects and Michael McNamara was another project that went beyond expectations.

"It was done in a remarkably short period and is modern and well done. There were certain architectural issues but it was a step up from what is usual in such projects. It does what it does very well and is something beyond the normal. We were struck by that and the ability to deliver very efficiently at speed," says O'Connor.

A new Lifetime Achievement Award was given to Jim Barrett, who recently retired as Dublin City Architect. Before that he was Limerick City Architect.

● The award winners will be on display at Plan Expo which takes place from November 8th-10th at the RDS (www.plan-expo.com)

OPUS ARCHITECTURE AND CONSTRUCTION AWARDS

CATEGORY	COMMENDED	HIGHLY COMMENDED	AWARD WINNER
Under €1 million	Twist-and-Turn, Ranelagh, D6 - GKMP Architects Ltd/Zolton Bodnar; Extension to house in Howth Road, Blackbanks, Dublin - Box Architecture/Bromart Ltd	Garden Pavilion, Churchtown, Dublin 14 - Sterrin O'Shea Architects/Meisterwerk Ltd; Tree House, Harold's Cross, D6W - GKMP Architects Ltd/Multibuild Projects Ltd	St Judes, Clifden Rd, Connemara, Co Galway - Boyer Ryan Kennihan Architects/Pascal Lyons Construction; Fuse Graphics, 30B Lennox, 27A Sygne St, D8 - Box Architecture Ltd/Irish Conservatories Ltd; Ranelagh Room, Sandford Rd, D6 - Anello Architects/Frank Walsh Building Contractor; House for Musicians, Carrickfin - Donaghy & Dimond Architects/Peter Duffy Building Contractor
Under €10 million	Hugh Lane Art Gallery, Charlemount House, Dublin 1 - Gilroy McMahon Architects/Collen Construction	The Source Arts Centre & Library, Thurles, Co Tipperary - McCullough Mulvin Architects/Tom Hayes Ltd	Loreto Community School, Milford, Co Donegal - Grafton Architects/Woodvale Construction
Over €10 million	Cliffs of Moher Visitor Centre, Co Clare - Reddy O'Riordan Staehli Architects/Rohcon Ltd; Ratoath College, Ratoath, Co Meath - McGarry Ní Éanaigh Architects/Midland Construction; Iveragh Road Town Renewal, Killorglin, Co Kerry - Murray O'Laoire Architects/Eamon Costello (Kerry) Ltd	Killanin Stand, Ballybrit, Co Galway - EPR Architects/Michael McNamara & Co Ltd; Cork School of Music, Cork - Murray O'Laoire Architects/John Sisk & Son Ltd	New Civic Offices, Cork City Council - ABK Architects/Cleary & Doyle Contracting; George's Court, Townsend St, D2 - KMD Architecture/G&T Crampton Ltd
Housing	Cluain Padraig, Westport, Co Mayo - Simon J Kelly & Partners (Mayo office)/Joyce Contractors & Developers; Balgaddy E, Griffen Ave, Balgaddy, Lucan, Co Dublin - Sean Harrington Architects/Gama Construction Ireland Ltd		Thornwood, Booterstown Ave, Blackrock, Co Dublin - O'Mahony Pike Architects/John Sisk & Sons Ltd; Hanover Quay, D4 - O'Mahony Pike Architects/John Sisk & Sons Ltd
Heritage	Annaghmore Schoolhouse, Annaghmore Estate, Co Sligo - Keys & Monaghan Architects Ltd/Terry McGovern Restorations; St Senan's Church, Kilrush, Co Clare - Hollypark Studio/L&M Keating Ltd		Shelbourne Hotel, D2 - Cantrell & Crowley Architects/McNamara & Co Ltd; Tullamore Courthouse, Tullamore, Co Offaly - NMA Architects/Purcell Construction Ltd; The Island Crematorium, Rocky Island, Ringaskiddy, Co Cork - Magee Creedon Architects/Comerstone Construction Ltd; Carton House Hotel & Spa, Maynooth, Co Kildare - Murray O'Laoire Architects/Piersie Contracting Ltd
Art in architecture	The Island Crematorium, Rocky Island, Ringaskiddy, Co Cork - Magee Creedon Architects/Comerstone Construction Ltd		Bon Secours Hospital, Co Galway - Murray O'Laoire Architects & Brian O'Connell Associates (healthcare architects)/TBD