



Restoration & Renovation at Dromoland Castle 2016 – 2019 Cost of work: 20 Million

Dromoland Castle is a protected structure, requiring expert repair and maintenance. A comprehensive programme of conservation work involving external stone repairs began at Dromoland Castle in 2016. The works were carried out under the direction of RIAI – accredited Conservation Architect, Michael Pledge to eliminate water penetration and enhance the thermal performance of the building. Phase one, the essential stone and window repairs, were completed over the winter months of January through April. “Minor fabric damage had occurred through water penetration to all walls and this is to be expected with a building dating from the 1820’s”, says Michael. All elevations required re-pointing to best practice conservation standards, and damaged stones needed to be replaced or repaired. Upgrading works to 194 windows located in the main castle was carried out. 130 windows are over 170 years old. The conservation work was exacting and time consuming, but it will help to see Dromoland through the next 100 years.

The essence of the design concept was to create a relaxed, sophisticated and elegant atmosphere that enhanced rather than competed with the inherent beauty of the building. Helen Casey design employed natural textiles and wall coverings, including fine linen with embossed velvet embroidery. Specially commissioned furniture was handcrafted and designed by O’Donnell Furniture working with Declan from Hayes Furniture (Declan who’s grandfather was a full-time carpenter for Dromoland estate before it became a hotel). to complement the overall look. Artwork was chosen to inform the visitor about our national treasures, such as prints depicting artefacts from the first century to early medieval times that form part of the collection of the National Museum of Ireland.

Green Initiatives

Management and staff are committed to protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations, to that end they have implemented policies and procedures reducing the hotel’s impact on its environment. Initiatives include; reducing landfilled waste; installing water-saving fixtures; using local and Irish suppliers; using eco-friendly cleaning products; recycling waste; tree-planting initiatives and vegetable-garden planting.

Waste Generation: Another concern of the environmental team was waste reduction. Significant resources are consumed in running any brick and mortar business, including a luxury destination resort such as Dromoland Castle. The impacts are multiple: depletion of natural resources, carbon generation in the process of processing raw materials, and landfill gas emissions.

The team’s goal was to improve recycling practices and reduce the volume of packaging entering the property. The castle now recycles all of its organic waste via separation and composting, while glass, cans, plastics, paper, hazardous waste, cardboard, and the like are segregated and collected for recycling.

Water & Energy Consumption: More efficient use of water is an important environmental goal, especially in the context of global warming. During the restoration and renovation phase, a primary focus was to move to Green Energy sources as follows.

- The Castle has changed from Oil to Gas
- We have installed a CHP Unit which generates 140 Kilowatts of electricity and 200 Kilowatts of Hot Water consistently from 7am – 11pm per day using less electricity usage.
- We have installed 8 LPG Boilers which produce 250 Kilowatts of hot water.
- We have installed our own Water Reservoir and we have reduced our water consumption by up to 70%.
- We plan to install solar panels in our staff accommodation.



Water Pollution and Wildlife: Not to be outdone, the maintenance and golf operations have undertaken their own initiatives to reduce their environmental impacts. Washwater from maintenance equipment cleaning operations is captured and recycle in a specially outfitted setup. The golf course equipment storage and maintenance area is still undergoing renovation to achieve the same goal, but all the carts run on battery power, and yes, there's more: course mowing occurs daily to allow careful management, runoff is buffered to protect the lake and the tidal River Rine that runs through the estate, irrigation is precisely calibrated based on data produced by the on-site weather station..

Golf Course Initiatives

- 10 year transition to creeping bentgrass on greens from annual meadowgrass. Bentgrass will require less water and nutrition, so saving on resources.
- Approx 1.8ha of previously maintained turf has been converted into natural rough to support biodiversity and ecological development.
- We have invested in a fleet of electric golf buggies.
- We are about to invest in new on course bins to offer a recycling option
- We plan to install solar panels in the maintenance facility to satisfy our demand for hot water.

This maintenance ethic respects the larger environment as well. A hundred acres of marshland and native larch, oak, birch, and pine trees occupy the 330 acre course, with 28,000 saplings recently added to supplement the trees planted with care hundreds of years ago, including a centuries-old old cypress. Foxes, deer, red squirrel, ducks, swans, water hens, and pheasant – some 22,000 of which are released on the estate each year after being bred on site – enjoy the refuge of this designated wildlife preserve.