



FROM FARMHOUSE

to

Grand Design



Words by Julie Keary
Photography by
Alan Smyth. [www.
smartpix.ie](http://www.smartpix.ie)



This amazing transformation took place under the watchful eye of Gráinne O' Neill of Architectural Spaces. It was a project very close to her heart as it was her own home she was transforming. We have seen some parts of Gráinne's home in previous issues and we have waited for many years to photograph the finished project. Gráinne is extremely busy running Architectural Spaces so naturally her business always seemed to take precedence over her own build. Also Grainne wanted everything to be just perfect so she was willing to wait and put her home on hold as she worked on her many other projects.



Gráinne redesigned the entire house both internally and externally. She knocked an old garage at the side of the house and designed a light filled kitchen and dining area with a living room that extends right into the garden and includes a two way inset fire which can be enjoyed from all sides. Directly above on the first floor she incorporated a master bedroom with balcony doors, walk through wardrobe an ensuite.

She also extended the rear of the existing house to incorporate a light filled library and music room which extends along the back of the house. One of Gráinne's main aims was to get as much light in as possible and to bring the garden into the house. This was achieved by her floor plan design which allows the space to flow effortlessly through out the house. She also incorporated many new windows while retaining the existing deep window sills and strategically placed roof lights to wash the house with natural light.



When Gráinne bought this tumble down cottage she saw the potential in it to be a wonderful home. She wanted to retain the old part of the farmhouse and its features but also bringing it up to date and giving it character, luxury and comfort with many contemporary touches. It also had to have a sense of its own history. The large sitting room started life as two separate rooms and through the process of spatial planning prior to the full renovation, she decided to open up this entire space, which included removing the dividing wall between these two rooms. This gave her a most impressive space to turn in to a sitting room. Gráinne also decided to raise the ceiling to give a much improved dimension to the room, which in turn allowed her to introduce a simple traditional coving detail.



Inset fireplace by
Matthews Firelaces



On dismantling the dividing wall between the two rooms, she made a thrilling discovery – the original limestone fire surround, likely to be more than a hundred years old. The fire surround lay beneath some ghastly plasterwork. Once exposed, she carefully dismantled the surround piece by piece, numbering each one in turn. She then rebuilt the fire surround in its current position where it is now the central focal point of the room. Miraculously, the fire surround was discovered in perfect condition, which is quite rare as more often than not the central key stones become damaged over time. With only a little care and sand blasting, it was heart-warming for her to restore and reinstate what felt like the heart of the home. She sourced the large cream wood-burning stove, which is a perfect fit within the surround. The thick dimension to the old walls is perfect for deep window seats that Gráinne cushioned with her own luscious fabrics. In keeping with the tradition of the old house Grainne put new timber double glazed sash windows throughout.







Stairs by Geraghty Joinery





Gráinne's colour schemes for every room vary, some rooms are finished in creams and whites and contrasted by strong shades such as orange seen in the two high backed chairs in the rear living room. Other rooms have a softer and calm colour scheme approach as seen in the original sitting room where she used colours such as blues, greens and bronze.

When it comes to attention detail Gráinne is meticulous. She designed the kitchen, library, master vanity and unit in the rear living room as internally hung solid painted units with concealed lighting and attention to detail second to none. The kitchen is ergonomically designed around the aga in a cream colour interspersed with duck egg blue loose cupboards



to give that splash of colour. A small seated area at the end of the kitchen show Gráinne's love of fresh colour but without overdoing it with the two upholstered chairs designed by Gráinne. The fabric is modern in colour with very regal stripes in blues browns pinks and greens. Gráinne designed and detailed all of the furniture in the house and commissioned it for manufacturing.

The feature window surrounds throughout again show her interior flare with her custom made complementing blinds. What was also very important to Gráinne as well as the spatial plan was her attention to subtle and secret lighting details which can be seen in almost all shots. Her attention to joinery details can also be seen throughout the house together with her use of fabrics and textures which gives the whole scheme its character and luxury.

A staircase leads from the large sitting room to the first floor and here Gráinne's talents are very evident again. In both the master ensuite and main bathroom she incorporated feature window surrounds and paneling along with window shutters. Her specification of sanitary ware is classic and sympathetic to the style of the house.



Bathroom ware from Bathroom World





All bedrooms are airy and spacious as Gráinne raised the ceilings internally on the first floor. She introduced an injection of carefully selected colour with the fabrics to all bedrooms

Character, luxury and comfort are indeed words that spring to mind while walking through this house. While it has many contemporary touches, it also seems to have a sense of its own history. A true labour of love that absorbed Gráinne from start to finish!





Get the Look

Architectural Design and Interior Design:
Architectural Spaces

Wallpaper, Furniture, Shutters, Mirrors, Rugs, Lighting and Window treatments:
Architectural Spaces

Stairs, Skirting, Architraves, Feature Window surrounds and Paneling:

Designed by Architectural Spaces:
Manufactured by Geraghty Joinery

Kitchen, Library unit and vanity unit:
Designed by Architectural Spaces,
Manufactured by Laval Fitted Furniture

Timber Floors: Woodplus

Sanitary ware: Bathroom World

Tiling: Rocca Tiles

Carpets: Munster Carpets

Cream Stove and Aga cooker: Murphy Heating

Inset two way fire: Matthews Firesplaces

Tiles behind Aga cooker: Cutting Edge Tiles

Drift wood rocking chairs: The Collection