



RESTORATION OF PULHOF CASTLE



**CLIENT:**

Province d'Anvers

ARCHITECT:

Erfgoed & Visie S.P.R.L.

INSTALLER:

Dakwerken Costermans bvba

TECHNIQUE: VMZ Roll cap in ZINC

PLUS

ORNAMENTS: Bull's eye

windows/Dormer windows/Curb members/Hip-knob finials/Small dome.

RESTORATION OF PULHOF CASTLE, WIJNEGEM (BELGIUM)

A magnificent, unchanged gem: such is the description that comes to mind on first seeing the Pulhof property in Wijnegem. Surprisingly, the site remained inaccessible to the public until 2003. It was not until the Province of Antwerp inherited the domain with its castle, its porch and its grounds that this beautiful oasis of greenery and serenity at the heart of the city became a place for pleasant walks and a cultural destination for the entire region. To achieve this, major restoration work was necessary, with one priority: the roof and its ornaments, which needed to be completely renovated while at the same time retaining the original appearance of the building.

A legacy of zinc

"A magnificent legacy" says Kurt Loomans, independent architect with Erfgoed & Visie, in charge of the renovations. It should be pointed out that Pulhof castle elegantly combines styles and periods. Although a large part of the castle dates from the

19th/18th? century, the magnificent porch, with its traditional brick and sandstone architecture, dates back to the 16th century. We have Henri Ackermans and the architect Stordiau, who was very popular with the haute bourgeoisie of the period, to thank

for the castle's style today. In 1907, Ackermans called on the famous Antwerp architect to restore and extend the current building in a Rococo style, but Stordiau decided otherwise and chose a Louis XVI-style architecture in keeping with the classical tradition.



BEFORE

Loyalty to a brand

When the Province of Antwerp inherited the castle in 2003, it had been unoccupied for several years and the rain was leaking inside. Numerous original elements such as ornaments and panels had disappeared from the roof. "Our aim was to completely restore the roof and recreate its original appearance" explains Kurt Loomans. "In fact, Christina Ackermans,

Henri Ackermans' daughter and Nicolaas van Haaren's widow, had clearly stipulated in her bequest that the castle must be used as a cultural facility, which also implied large-scale renovation of the building. There was no double glazing and all the sanitary installations, electricity and heating had to be replaced." In 2007, a master plan with the various phases of restoration





AFTER

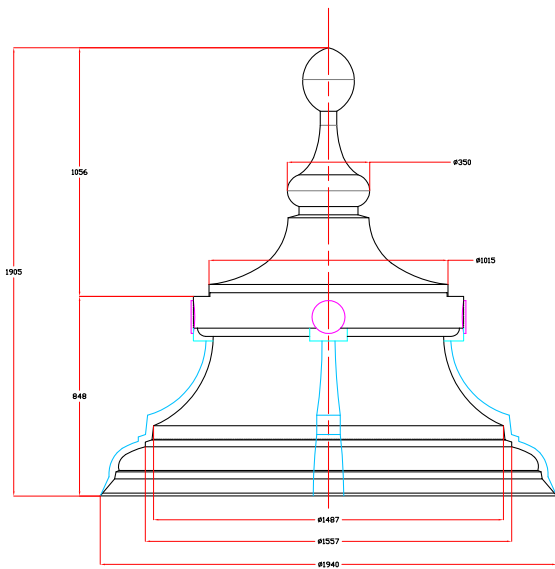
and re-purposing of the castle was drawn up. The first phase involved the complete restoration of the roof. It was urgent to repair the leaks and remove mould and asbestos – work that had already been started in 2005 – then to insulate and renovate the zinc roof, and finish with the exterior joinery at roof level. The second phase covered restoration of the facade and the porch.

The French classical-style mansard roof of Pulhof castle, flanked by numerous ornaments, is typical of the period. Renovating the entire roof and all the decorative elements using zinc is also characteristic of this period. The specifications given by the architect Stordiau in 1908 to the contractor Edouard Van Eekert of Antwerp stipulated using “Vieille Montagne”

zinc (the former name of the VMZINC brand). “Pulhof castle had a historic connection with VMZINC. It was only logical therefore that, over 100 years later, we called on VMZINC and its teams yet again to restore both the roof and the ornaments” adds the architect.

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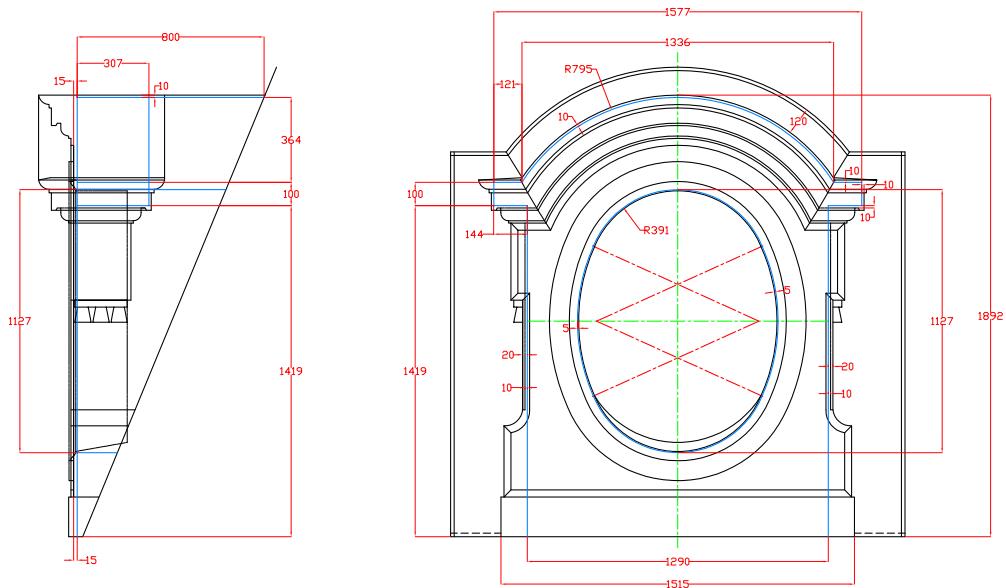
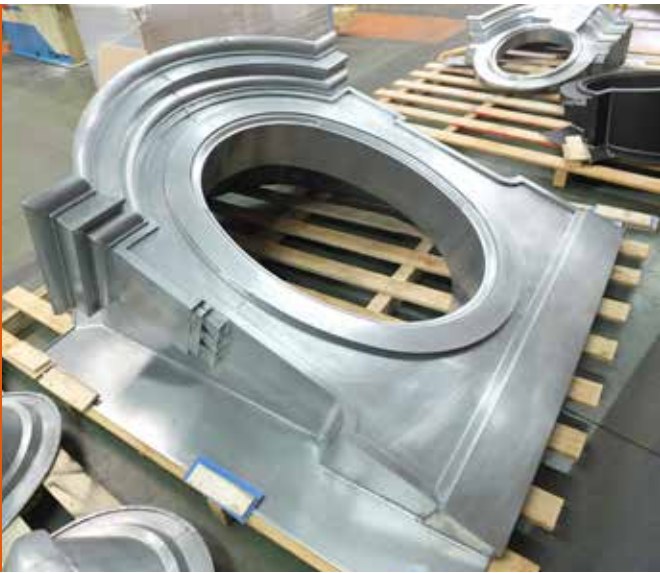


Craftsmen who manufacture identical copies

No Louis XVI roof would be complete without ornaments. The VMZINC ornamental metal workers made perfect copies of the original bull's eye windows, dormer windows, domes, finials and curb members, just as they had been designed by the architect Stordiau for Pulhof castle.

"VMZINC ornaments come from a long tradition" confirms Sammy Baron, Customer Support Manager at VMZINC Ornaments. "A French tradition. If you take one look at the rooftops of Paris you will see the quantity of majestic ornaments in zinc and copper that were manufactured by





the "Ateliers d'Art Français" (which became VMZINC Ornaments). "VMZINC perpetuates this 19th century tradition. Production still takes place in France. We employ twenty people there who are true craftsmen and every day they manufacture ornaments in zinc and copper for our clients."

As well as a standard range of ornaments, a large part of production concerns a "made-to-order" offer. "Our ornamental metal workers are often asked to manufacture a perfect copy based on original drawings of a building, or to adapt concepts. This was the case for Pulhof castle. First we made very precise studies and drawings that we had approved by the architect prior to producing and supplying "ready to install" pieces on-site. The main difficulty was getting very





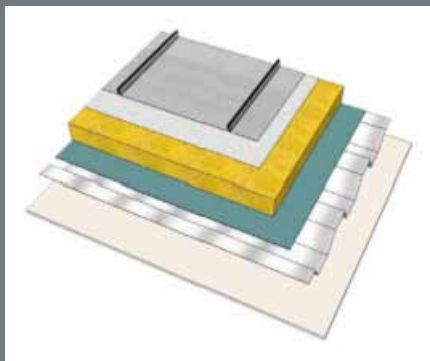
Modern techniques for authentic elegance

“I am proud of how we have renovated and insulated the roof of Pulhof castle” admits installer Wilfried Debrie of Costermans roofing company.

In short, restoration of Pulhof castle’s roof was a challenging job but the result is remarkable. And it will last for many years.”

“We used modern techniques without changing the original appearance of the roof. First we installed installation panels on the mansard roof of the castle, before installing the zinc roll-cap roofing. This warm roofing system consists of installing ZINC PLUS (a technical zinc) using the patented VMZ Roll cap technique on sandwich panels, without ventilating the underside of the ZINC PLUS. We just installed a VMZINC Membrane that is watertight but not vapour tight between the ZINC PLUS and the insulation panels. ZINC PLUS offers a huge advantage in that it

enables thinner roof flashing to be used, does not require ventilation and has no risk of incompatibility with the structure. The result is a perfectly insulated roof that did not necessitate any work on the original roof structure.”





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**USA**

Umicore building Products USA Inc.
3600 Glenwood Avenue
Suite 250
Raleigh - North Carolina
NC - 27612-4945
Tel.: + 1 919 874 7173
info@vmzinc-us.com
www.vmzinc-us.com

UNITED KINGDOM

Umicore Marketing Services UK Ltd.
Collier House
Mead Lane
Hertford, Herts, SG13 7AX
Great Britain
Tel.: + 44 1992 822288
vmzinc.uk@umicore.com
www.vmzinc.co.uk
www.vmzinc.ie

FRANCE

Umicore Building Products France S.A.S.
Les Mercuriales
40 rue Jean Jaurès
93176 Bagnolet Cedex
Tel.: + 33 1 49 72 42 42
www.vmzinc.fr
www.vmzinc.france@umicore.com