



LOOPLINE ARCHES
THE BUNKER
CONNOLLY STATION
DUBLIN 1

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT
ASSESSMENT

MAY 2020

7L
ARCHITECTS

DCC PLAN NO 2848/20
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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

2. SITE HISTORY

3. CONDITION ASSESSMENT

4. PROPOSED REFURBISHMENT &
UPGRADE

5. ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT
ASSESSMENT

6. CONCLUSIONS

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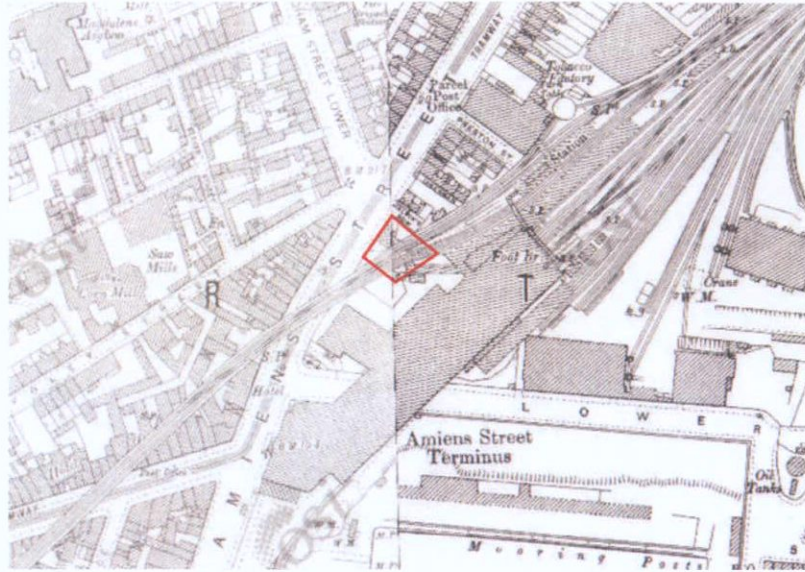
1.0 INTRODUCTION

7L Architects have been commissioned by Iarnród Éireann, to prepare an architectural heritage impact assessment in respect of the proposed works to the former station hall to the DART station (known as the *Bunker*) and the adjacent arches below the Loopline, part of the Connolly Station complex along Amiens Street, Dublin 1, a protected structure. This project has been discussed at two pre-planning meetings (4 September & 5 November 2019), held with Klara Crowley, planning officer DCC and Niamh Kiernan, Asst. Conservation Officer DCC. Two separate applications for Section 5 declarations on the works have been lodged with DCC - 0026/20; 0108/20 confirming exemption for items of work. This application relates to the proposed works on behalf of Iarnród Éireann that were deemed to constitute development in the DCC declaration 0108/20 issued on the 17 April 2020 – alterations to the external elevations of the former station hall and the change of use to offices.

Location	Connolly Station, Dublin 1
Local Authority	Dublin City Council
Statutory Protection	Protected Structure (RPS ref. 130)
Zoning	Z5: to consolidate and facilitate the development of the central area, and to identify, reinforce, strengthen and protect its civic design character and dignity
NIAH Number	50010118 (Connolly Station)
Special Interest	Regional interest (Connolly Station)
Principal Sources	Casey, C. (2005) <i>The Buildings of Ireland: Dublin</i> . Yale University Press Lawrence, W.L. (late 1800s). Photographic collection in National Library of Ireland. Goodbody, R. (2014) <i>Dublin Pt. III, 1756 to 1847</i> (Irish Historic Town Atlas no. 26), Royal Irish Academy, Dublin. Ordnance Survey maps
Inspection Dates	18 November 2019, 14 January 2020
Prepared By	Fergal Mc Namara MRIAI RIAI Conservation Architect Grade 1
Report Issued	05 May 2020

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2.0 SITE HISTORY



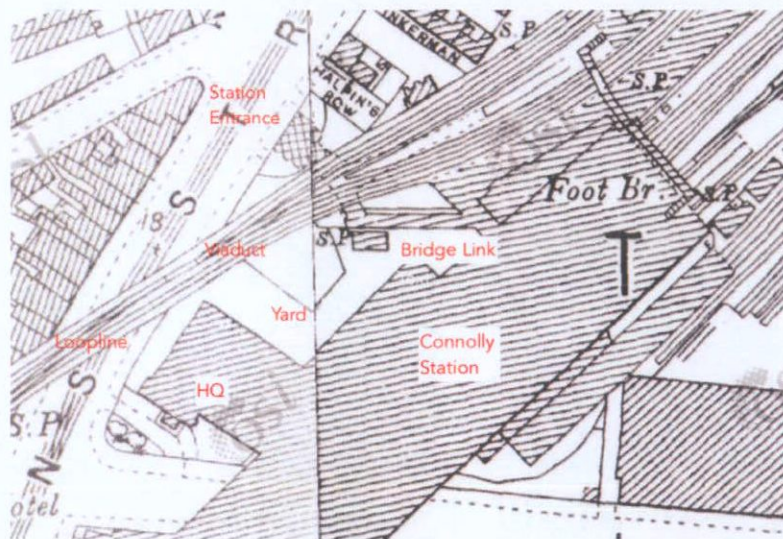
1. Extract from Ordnance Survey map (1889) showing City of Dublin Junction Railway station and bridge link to platforms. Site outlined in red.

On the 29th of November 1844 the Dublin and Drogheda Railway Company opened a railway station at its Dublin terminus close to the docks on Amiens Street. Its impressive Italianate grey limestone station building designed by William Deane Butler and Sir John Macneill was completed in 1846. By 1853, the railway had been extended as far as Belfast, and became known as the Great Northern Railway Company. In 1879, construction commenced on a headquarters building for the company on an empty plot directly across Sherriff Street. It was designed by John Lanyon, using red sandstone and brick, and remains the headquarters of Iamród Éireann to this day.

Completed in 1891, the Loopline crosses the River Liffey to connect Connolly Station on the north to Pearse Station on the south side of the city, being the only railway bridge to cross the river. It was also known as the Liffey Viaduct or The City of Dublin Junction Railway. Its open-latticed span over the Liffey is much reviled given its impact on views along the quays, especially due to its proximity to the Custom House. While it made the quays west of the bridge inaccessible to ships, its linking of the railways from north to south through the capital was of key strategic importance. The Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford Railway company instructed its engineer, John Chaloner Smith to

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commence construction in 1889, following approval of his designs by an Act of Parliament of 1884. Its two tracks follow a wide arc across the Liffey at a height of approximately six metres over the street. A straighter run would have travelled east of the Custom House, thereby cutting off a longer section of quay from shipping.

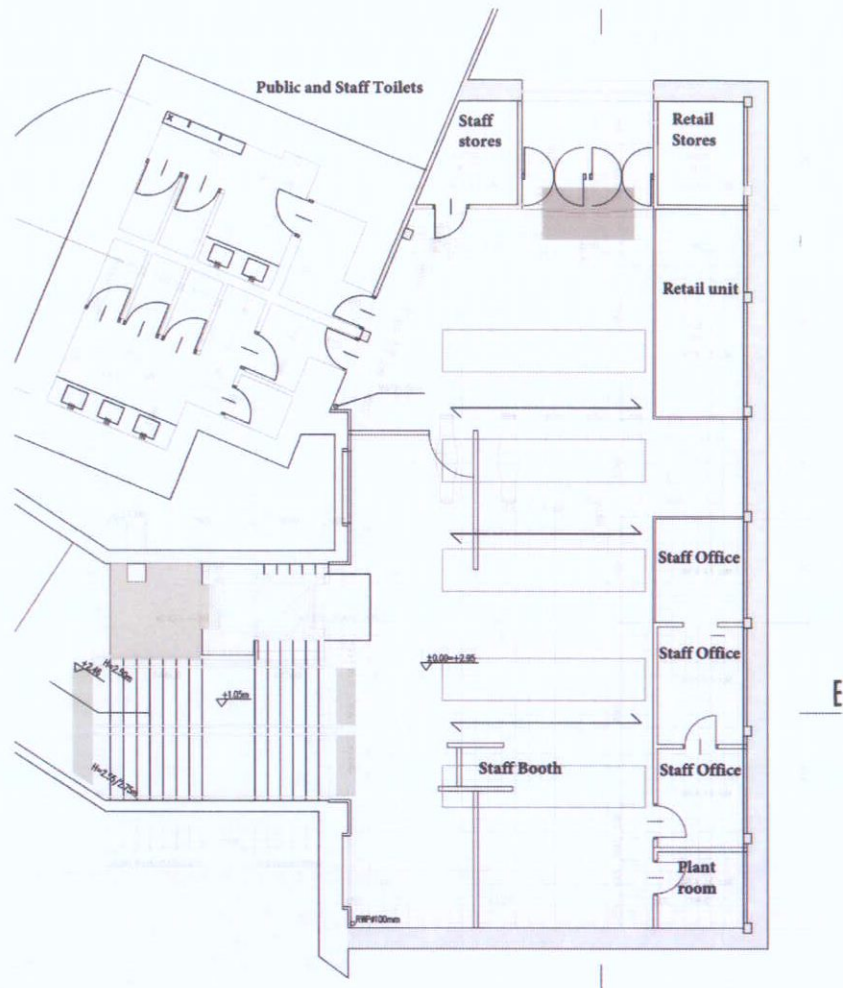


2.Extracts from Ordnance Survey map (1889) with different buildings labelled.

To the north end of Connolly Station, the City of Dublin Junction Railway had its own station with a separate street entrance known as Amiens Street Junction. It was located at the front of the brick and stone arches of the viaduct, close to the most northerly of the bridge spans of the Loophline where it crosses Amiens Street. This station encompassed platforms 5-7, and was only connected to the main station in 1950s, by which time the street entrance ceased to be used.

In 1984, the single-storey, brick-faced station hall was constructed at the former station entrance to provide access to the new DART service, which was served from platforms 5-7. It contained ticket stalls, a retail unit and public toilets to serve the 5,000 passengers that passed through daily. It also contained three offices for Iarnród Éireann staff, stores and a plant room.

This ceased to be used in the early 2000s when Connolly Station was refurbished and extended, and access to the DART platforms was changed to the main hall. Now known as the 'bunker', the former station hall is presently only used for emergency egress from the DART platforms.



3. Plan record of former layout to station hall showing ticket stalls, offices, WCs, retail unit and ancillary spaces.

3.0 CONDITION ASSESSMENT

3.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

A single-storey former station hall dating from the 1980s is located along a late-nineteenth century, brick and stone viaduct close to Connolly Station on the north side of Dublin City. Since the late 1990s, it has been used solely for emergency egress from the DART platforms, an adjacent brick arch was most recently used as a motorcycle repair shop, accessed from Amiens Street. The hall sits in front of set of granite steps giving access to a corridor below the DART platforms. Behind a set of double doors is an underpass which is used by thousands of commuters daily, yet the hall is empty and in a deteriorating condition.



4. View along Amiens Street of former DART station hall and viaduct arches.

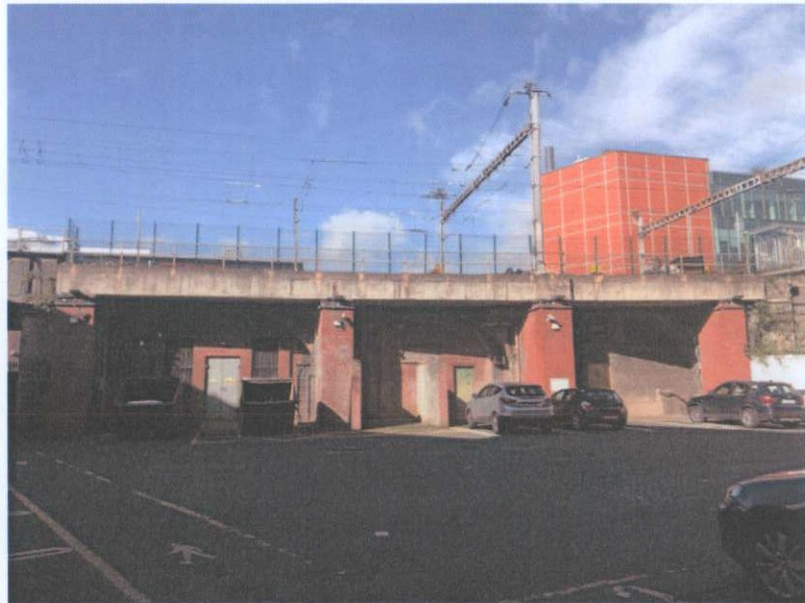
3.2 HALL EXTERIOR

The building has a simple box-like form; its flat roof expressed by exposing precast concrete roof beams to create a cornice affect. It is clad in brown wire-cut brick, pointed with white pigmented cement, with a chamfer detail at expansion joints and corners. Visible from the DART platform above, the roof is covered with mastic asphalt that is badly cracking and is uninsulated.

There is one entrance from the street side, through metal-sheeted double doors from a triangular forecourt accessed from the footpath behind mild steel painted railings. Aluminium-framed clerestory windows are placed between the exposed beams, otherwise the walls

are blank where six advertising boards were removed recently. A traffic signal box has also been placed tight against the front wall.

The forecourt is paved with hexagonal concrete paving slabs, both of the brick arches are infilled with concrete and painted out regularly to remove graffiti. A large advertising hoarding was until recently fitted across the southernmost vault which is used for railway services; the side wall of the bunker obscures part of the adjacent vault. Given their current condition and vacancy, the former station hall and adjacent viaduct arches do not make a positive contribution to the streetscape of Amiens Street.



5. View of viaduct arches from yard to rear of Connolly Station HQ.

3.3 HALL INTERIOR

The main entrance doors lead into a large room, six metres in height with exposed precast concrete roof beams, and lit by the clerestory windows and plastic pyramidal rooflights set between the downstands. Its luminaire lighting, suspended from the soffit of the concrete roof, is a relatively recent installation. Leaks on the floor and staining on the concrete are evidence of roof defects above.

Its walls are faced with painted concrete blocks, with exposed concrete columns alongside marking out the bays. Services are attached to the walls with conduit, along with roof drainage from above. Its floors are covered with terracotta hexagonal tiles, with extensive amounts replaced with concrete infill. There is a small office/store placed in the north corner of the room.



6. View of blind arches either side of granite steps from former station hall.

Along the viaduct wall are a pair of brickwork blind arches that have survived from the late-nineteenth century station entrance. It appears that they were internal to the former station building, and consist of red brick walls laid in Flemish-bond with yellow brick arches and moulded dressings. Its surfaces have been painted, perhaps in lieu of proper cleaning when they became internal to the station hall.

Between the arches are the 5m-wide solid granite steps that gave access to the platforms and an overpass over the yard to the rear of the headquarters building. A third of the stairs width is cordoned off with a steel balustrade, guarding a large concrete base which is faced with rough blockwork that has been crudely cut out of the granite steps. This is the only area where the steps are visible, they are otherwise entirely covered with patterned tiles; brown in the 1980s, more recently light grey with visibility strips at edges.

Today, at the top of the steps are a landing and corridor lined with glazed tiles (of 1980s date) and metal-framed plasterboard access ceiling. At the end of the corridor, a set of metal doors gives access out onto the underpass leading to the DART platforms, which is a public area of the station. These doors are left available for emergency escape with push-bars, but are alarmed to deter access otherwise.



7. Detail of granite steps.

3.4 VAULTS

Adjacent to the hall are two brick-vaulted arches that form part of the viaduct. The northernmost forms part of the former station hall, and is accessed through two doors set either side of a concrete column. Although in a dilapidated state, these rooms appear to have been used as toilets, and were subdivided with blockwork partitions. Only parts of the brickwork vault can be seen above, being obscured by the infill walls. A wall blocks off the remainder of the vault behind, which is only accessed from the railway yard. On this side, the arched opening is infilled with rough mass concrete, its door opening now fitted with plywood sheeting. High-level vents are also fitted with shutters. Further obscuring the front of the arches are massive brick piers that support the concrete viaduct extension above.



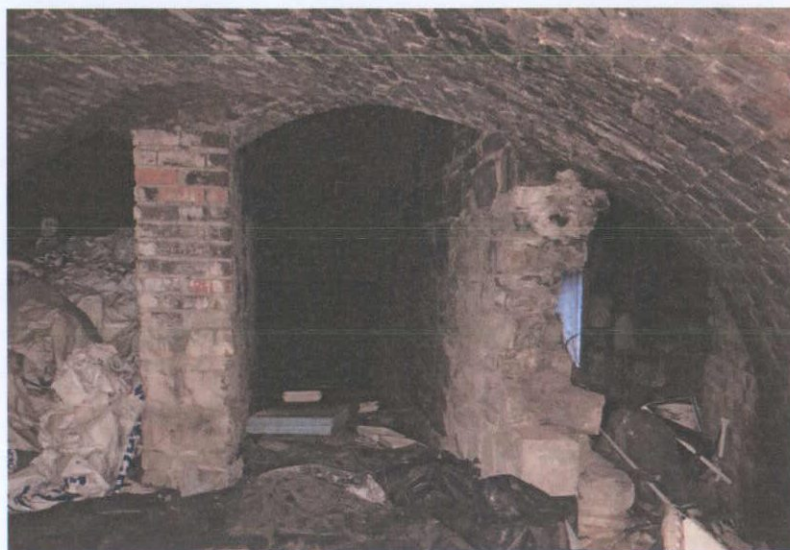
8. View of vault (former bicycle repair shop) looking towards Amiens Street.

Alongside is the former motorcycle repair shop, with its own door out onto the forecourt on Amiens Street, and another out into the railway yard. Its arch is infilled with aluminium framed glazing and blockwork to the street side (now covered by plywood). A concrete post is placed across the front of the arch at the junction with the station hall, leaving a 1.8m blank section. Its concrete floor is lined with bonded glazed tiles, and its vault is exposed and painted with several layers of white, cream and pink. Side walls are lined with rock-faced limestone ashlar, set in a random pattern, with a course of granite at the spring of the arch. The brickwork wall infill to the yard is lined internally with white glazed tiles.



9. View of screen wall below viaduct extension to front of smaller vaults.

Two other, lower vaults are located to the rear of the former station hall. Access to the first of these is blocked by the granite steps, although there is a low hatch fitted with a door in a side wall that gives access to the next vault. Both have uneven rough concrete floors and limited services. The northernmost is kept clear and tidy to act as an escape route from the passenger lift giving access to the DART platforms. Under the steps, there is a considerable amount of debris and rubbish, making access to an external door that leads out onto a narrow passage running between the viaduct and 110 Amiens Street difficult. These vaults are noticeably damper than the larger vaults.



10. View of lower vault towards underside of granite steps (in shadow).



11 & 12. View of landing to steps link to DART platforms (top) and view towards entrance door in former station hall, now cleared out (bottom).

3.5 CONCLUSION

Being vacant and unheated for an extended period, each of the rooms and vaults show signs of moisture ingress. Modern linings and fittings are in poor condition, obscure historic character and are not suitable for conservation or repair. Of its historic fabric; its brick-lined masonry vaults are in fair condition, and while they appear dry in most locations there is some evidence of moisture ingress where the internal rainwater drainage has failed. The walls and vaults are obscured by modern coatings and linings, and would benefit from these being cleared away to allow them to be inspected, but also appreciated for their spatial and material qualities. The impressive blind arches and steps are also in need of specialist repair, and reversal of later alterations and additions where possible.

4.0 PROPOSED REFURBISHMENT & UPGRADE

4.1 PROJECT SCOPE

Iarnród Éireann intend to refurbish and upgrade the historic Great Northern Railway Offices, which they have used as headquarters since their foundation. This project will be procured over several phases, and will require office space to allow staff to decant for a temporary period while the works progress.

Approximately 70 staff members are presently located in an office building off Oriel Street Upper that will need to be vacated in Summer 2020. These will need to be accommodated while the first phase of works to the headquarters take place in 2020/2021. The disused vaults and former DART station hall at the Loopline viaduct, on the other side of the yard from the HQ building, were identified as the preferred location for these new offices.

Much of the proposed work will be carried out under the Section 5 declarations already obtained for this project. However, the project proposals are listed below to describe the full scope of the project, while the impacts of the items that constitute development (alterations to facades and material change of use) are addressed in the next chapter.

The following new facilities and upgrade works are proposed:

- A new fire escape stairs from the DART platforms down to the railway yard.
- New toilets, including universal access.
- A new 'green' roof and external fabric insulation to the former station hall.
- New windows and glazing to hall façade and arched openings to vaults.
- A new mezzanine level and office cubicles to hall.
- Meeting room and kitchenette for staff.
- Associated plant room and services.
- External areas hard and soft landscaping.

It is intended that the offices would remain of use beyond the completion of the upgrade to the HQ building, and will be designed

to a high standard. Particular care will be required to upgrade the historic brick vaults into use as offices, for which there are several successful precedents in the city.

4.2 CONSERVATION APPROACH

These proposals have been designed to reverse inappropriate interventions of the past that have resulted in the poor presentation of the historic vaults of the viaduct, and the surviving fabric of the former station, impacting on the historic character of the spaces. Best practice conservation principles - *to do as little as possible, but as much as is necessary*, are followed while ensuring that the building can be adapted to provide a pleasant and sustainable workplace. For the historic vaults, the works are restricted to stripping out low-quality modern finishes, cleaning, and replacing with high-quality, low-impact interventions that will allow the historic fabric and spaces to be appreciated.

Cleaning will be informed by test panels, using super-heated steam to ensure that brick surfaces are undamaged, dust production and waste water is minimised, while also reducing the risk of activating salts. Poultices will remove flaking paint, which poses a risk of lead paint contamination. The new concrete floors will be used to carry service runs, impacts on historic fabric will be minimised, and will have a separation layer at the edges to reduce the impact on the historic walls. Consolidation and repair of exposed masonry and brickwork to be repaired using lime-rich mortars, following the removal of modern infill and subdividing walls.

4.3 DESIGN APPROACH

The aim of any refurbishment should be to add a significant, new layer to a historic building, without compromising its character and avoiding unnecessary further loss. Any interventions should be minimised, and seek to make all parts of the buildings and site accessible especially where they have fallen into disuse. Using quality materials designed in a sympathetic yet contemporary way is considered best conservation practice in relation to adapting old buildings, while repairing and conserving authentic historic fabric.

The refurbishment of the arches and former DART station will provide a viable new use for these redundant structures, that in their present

condition detract from the streetscape along Amiens Street, and the setting of the HQ building in the yard.

The proposed scheme addresses the challenges for adapting the structures for use as offices under the following criteria – *universal access, fire safety, health & safety, staff welfare, thermal performance, services & data, workplace requirements.*

4.3.1 EXTERNAL AREAS

As the arches and station hall detract from their setting, both on the public side along Amiens Street, and within the yard they share with the HQ building, the upgrade and refurbishment are also an opportunity to enhance these settings.

There are however significant constraints in relation to its appearance due to the modern extension to the viaduct to increase its capacity to allow for DART services in the 1980s. This introduced concrete platforms supported on brick-clad piers to the east side which screen the historic vaults to the rear.

The areas to the front of the vaults on both sides are to be hard and soft-landscaped to improve the presentation on the approach. The removal of advertising signage from the bunker wall and in front of the viaduct arches and the utilitarian railings as part of this project will be a significant improvement. Along Amiens Street this will enhance the public realm.

On the yard side, the hard landscaping will provide space for staff to enjoy the south-facing aspect, while also including visual markers along the escape route from the rail platforms above as far as the access gate onto Amiens Street.

4.3.2 FAÇADE TREATMENT

It is proposed to remove the free-standing walls to the front of the vaults, and replace the mass concrete and modern brick infill with glazing, so the form and materiality of the historic vaults can be better appreciated both within the Irish Rail yard and to Amiens Street. The new glazing will be set parallel to the outside edge of the arch, at present the brick and concrete are perpendicular to the side walls. The newly-glazed vaults will provide visual animation to the public realm, where at present there are hoarding and advertising displays. It is proposed to install glazing at the junction of the bunker with the

vault so that while it will remain semi-observed it can be read from the exterior.

Moveable screens to the triangular raised bed along the footpath will provide security and a degree of privacy to the offices during the working day and after hours. This will avoid the need for roller shutters or a more defensive façade treatment, while softening and 'greening' the hard landscape of Amiens Street.

The design of the HQ building facades took their inspiration from the Italian *palazzo* with a strong rusticated base, a loftier *piano nobile* with a strongly expressed eaves cornice. In its materials of red brick and red sandstone, it reinterprets the *palazzo* in its context of Dublin close to the end of the nineteenth century.

Given the utilitarian and austere appearance and blank walls of the former station hall and the infilling of the arches, it is proposed to reinterpret the design approach used for the HQ. In this way, the former station hall could serve to enhance, rather than detract, from the setting of Amiens Street and the protected structures of the vaults and the HQ building.

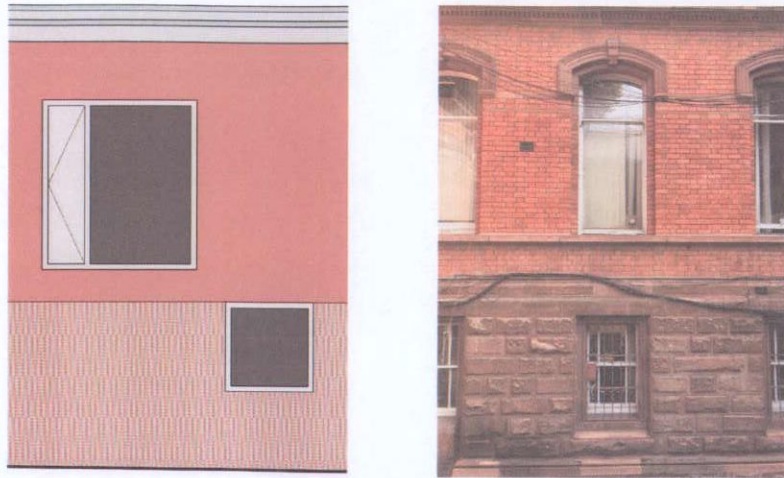
At present the former station hall is uninsulated, its existing flat roof has numerous defects, and the exposed concrete beams are a cold bridge. External insulation is the preferred method of thermally upgrading existing buildings (where possible) as it reduces the risk of thermal bridging and interstitial condensation in comparison to internal dry-lining.

It is proposed to externally insulate the former station hall using high-performance rigid insulation, and finished with a render system. The render will be pigmented to give a terracotta colour to complement the brick and sandstone facades of the HQ, and the terracotta tiles of 110 Amiens Street. At the base of the walls, it is proposed to 'rusticate' it with bonded brick slips up to a height of 2.7m, being more resilient to impact damage.

For the windows, it is proposed to animate the street level with fixed lights that sit along the plinth level. On the upper level, or *piano nobile*, are floor-to-ceiling height windows with opening vent panels that introduce light, natural ventilation and views out onto the street.

When insulating the concrete roof, it is proposed to form a new fascia detail using metal trims and fibre cement panels, while the concrete beam ends are placed behind the insulated layer to minimise the risk of cold-bridging.

The thermal upgrade will necessitate the removal of the advertising signage, significantly improving the appearance of the building and its surrounds.



13. Visual showing section of proposed façade treatment to former station hall with Italianate *palazzo* façade of the HQ building.

4.3.4 INTERNAL ALTERATIONS

In order to provide sufficient office space, it is proposed to remove the modern WC partitions to fully clear out the vaults, and install a new mezzanine level in the former station hall. This new level is to be accessed using the existing granite stairs, and is close to the current level of the access corridor to the DART station.

A wide slot will be maintained between the edge of the mezzanine and the blind arches along the viaduct wall, allowing these historic features to be appreciated within a double-height space. Surface water drainpipes will be relocated externally and any surface-fixed M&E ducting relocated away from the brickwork, which will be cleaned and conserved.

Single-occupancy offices will be placed at each end of the former hall to create a single large open plan area between. Their partitions will be designed to form an internal lining that continues along the edge of the mezzanine to provide adequate fire separation from the two levels. This lining will maintain views through to the blind arches, and also create a protected lobby to the granite stairs at ground level.

WCs will be placed under the granite stairs (making use of the existing section that was removed), and a plant room is to be installed in the lower vault behind the stairs, accessed from the yard only. The steps are to be cleared of the low-quality tiled surfaces, only the trafficable

areas will be recovered with hardwood with edge grips. This will allow the original granite steps to be visible on the upper levels and edges.

The vaults will be left exposed and cleaned of flaking paint, some of which contains lead. There will be no internal sub-divisions of the vaults so that their spaces can be fully appreciated, while being naturally lit from both ends. The existing concrete floors will be replaced with insulated concrete floors.

On the upper corridor under the railway platforms it is proposed to provide a kitchenette, WCs and a meeting room with views out over the yard. The concrete block wall will be externally insulated and rendered which will improve its appearance.

4.3.5 FIRE ESCAPE

As noted above, the fire escape strategy for the offices utilises the existing granite stairs, presently used for emergency egress from the railway platforms. This will require a new external escape stairs to be provided as the offices will no longer be accessible to the public. It is proposed to install a new stairs through an existing undercroft below the railway platform, which will be accessed from the existing lobby off the DART station underpass. The new stairs will be sheltered with a perforated steel rain screen with a gantry link beneath the soffit of the southbound platform. Access to the lower vaults is maintained.

4.3.6 UNIVERSAL ACCESS

Given the extent of upper floor area provided by the mezzanine, and that essential facilities and access are available to both floors, it is not proposed to provide an access lift to the offices. It is possible for a wheelchair user to access the offices by using the rail station or from the carpark and street level. If necessary, the nearby station passenger lift could be used, just outside the entrance to the proposed offices.

4.3.7 BUILDING SERVICES

Building services including ventilation, heating, power and data will be comprehensively upgraded as part of the refurbishment. Presently, the proliferation of wiring, ducting and plant is visually intrusive, and not fit for purpose. New heating will improve thermal comfort, while improved technology for lighting, ventilation and fire safety will allow the impacts on the historic fabric to be minimised. In all cases, existing openings and conduits will be re-used for the installation of new

services between the spaces. When these are not available, the strategy will be to surface fix in order to reduce any impacts on historic fabric, where chasing will be avoided. The new floors will be used as far as possible for distributing building services around the offices.



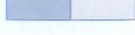
4.3.8 WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS

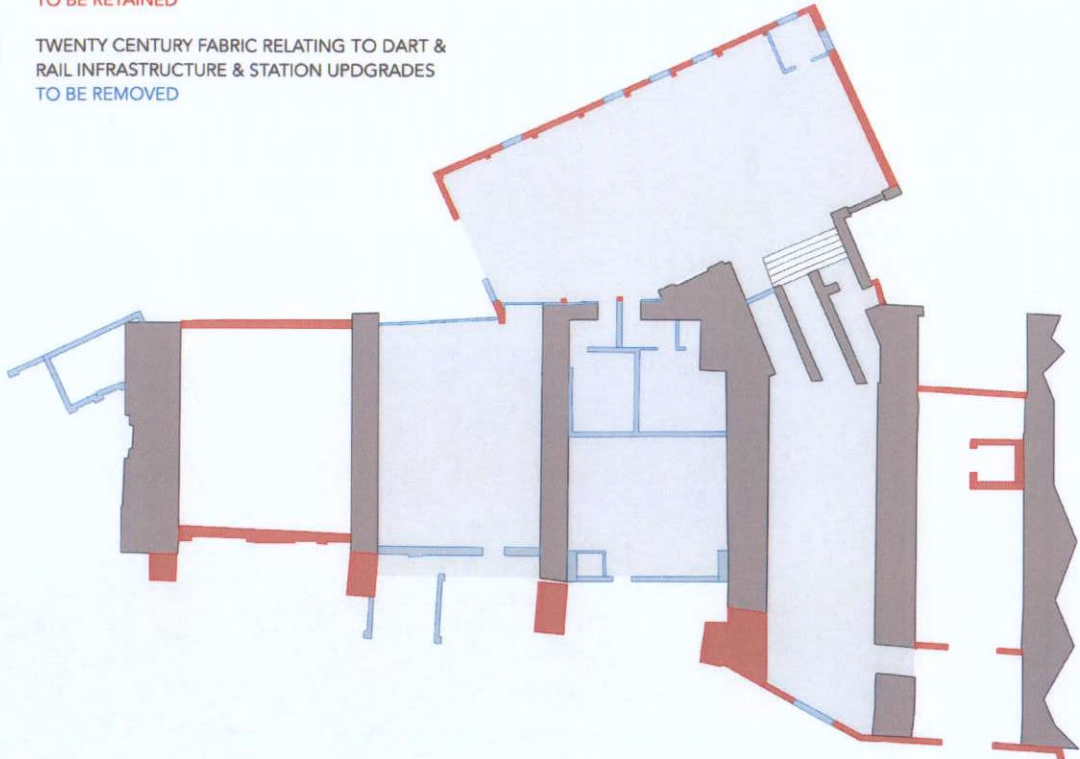
The proposed new offices will be set in a thermally upgraded and refurbished space, with twenty-first century facilities. The historic character of the vaults and former station hall are conserved and better presented for the enjoyment of staff and for passers-by.






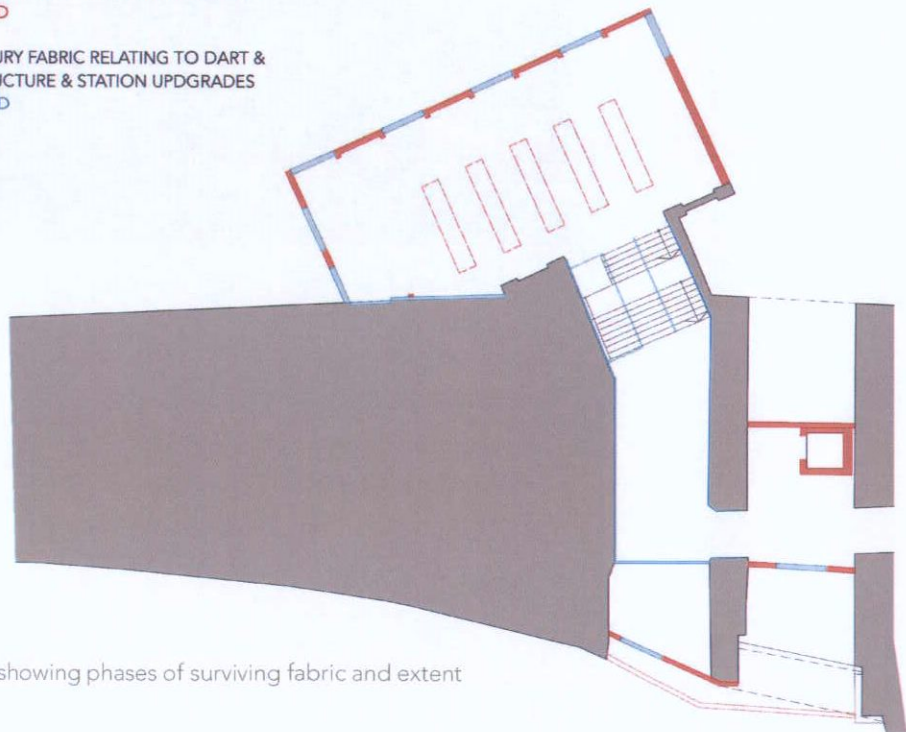
14. View of entrance and forecourt off Amiens Street.

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT: Loopline Arches, Dublin 1

-  NINETEENTH CENTURY FABRIC RELATING TO LOOPLINE VIADUCT & FORMER AMIENS STREET STATION
-  TWENTY CENTURY FABRIC RELATING TO DART & RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE & STATION UPDGRADES TO BE RETAINED
-  TWENTY CENTURY FABRIC RELATING TO DART & RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE & STATION UPDGRADES TO BE REMOVED



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15. Ground and first floor plans showing phases of surviving fabric and extent of proposed removals.

5.0 ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 PROPOSED

It is proposed to re-use and adapt the vaults and former station hall as offices and ancillary facilities for the use of Iarnród Éireann staff. Works that constitute development for this project include the material change of use, and the alterations to the façade of the former station hall to provide windows, a new entrance door set in curtain walling and an external insulation system.

5.2 THREATS TO SIGNIFICANCE

Within the subject site area, the protected structure includes the brickwork vaults of the Loopline viaduct and surviving fabric relating to the former Amiens Street Station that is contained within the 1980s station hall (see fig.13). The proposed works, where they relate to the nineteenth century fabric, involve the reversal of later additions that obscure its historic character so that the viaduct vaults can be re-used as offices. Otherwise, the works relate to upgrading the 1980s station hall for use as offices, along with the enhancement of the public realm along Amiens Street.

As demolitions are restricted to the removal of twentieth-century fabric of negligible architectural heritage interest, threats to the significance of the protected structure are minimized.

5.3 IMPACT

The former station hall has been vacant for several decades, and the condition of its roof has led to deterioration of the historic blind arches that have survived to its interior. Further losses will occur unless a viable new use is found for the building.

When in use, the station hall was a vibrant part of the train station complex, which included public toilets, retail and offices. The proposed alterations to the façades of the former station hall provide for offices, a viable new use ancillary to the operation of the rail station. They will also enliven and animate the blank facades, prone to vandalism, and enhance the setting of the protected structure – Connolly Station, the HQ building and the Loopline viaduct.

5.4 MITIGATION

As part of the design process, mitigation strategies were devised that minimise the impacts on historic building fabric and that would enhance its character from its current dilapidated state:

- low-quality interventions such as the infill walls to the vaults are to be replaced with more sensitively designed screens and enclosures that allow the historic vaults to be revealed internally and externally, while also being reversible;
- the proposed new mezzanine is set back from the viaduct to allow the brick blind arches to remain visible and does not bear or fix onto historic fabric;
- the external appearance of the 1980s station hall 'bunker' will be significantly improved by the installation of high-quality windows and pigmented render sympathetic to the prevailing character of the historic brickwork buildings along Amiens Street and within Connolly Station;
- the wide granite steps are to be conserved and presented where not being used as part of the circulation;
- the external works will enhance the setting of the protected structure along Amiens Street as well as in the yard which it shares with the HQ building;
- the proposed new planted areas will improve the biodiversity and amenity value of the subject site, both for the public along Amiens Street, and for staff along the south-face of the viaduct looking towards the historic HQ building and station;
- the removal of advertising signage to the bunker and viaduct will improve the appearance and impact of the protected structure and its setting;
- upgrading of the exterior and interior will use high quality finishes, that are part of a well-designed and sensitive response to this complex structure and brief;
- mechanical ventilation installations will be designed to carry away excess moisture that has entered the building through decades of under-use.
- new wall and roof coverings are designed to improve the weathering and thermal performance of the building, distinguishing them from original fabric and detailed to protect and weather the surviving walls;
- the new accommodation is to be set inside the historic structure so that the interventions are reversible, and that impact on the historic fabric is minimised;

- ventilation and drainage of all cavities will be introduced, detailed to minimise the risk of condensation and moisture ingress on new and historic fabric;
- stone flooring or pavement identified during the site clearance will be salvaged and re-used as part of the hard landscaping.

6.0 CONCLUSION

In its present state, the vaults and station hall are hoarded up, inaccessible, and suffering from neglect. While it serves a purpose as part of an emergency escape route, it has lain vacant for almost two decades. Its exterior detracts from the appearance of Amiens Street, one of the main thoroughfares into the city centre.

The adaptive re-use of this building will ensure the preservation of the form and fabric of the vaults as well as what remains of the former Amiens Street Station. The new mezzanine and offices are designed to be sympathetic to the historic structure and its settings; the proposed new use as offices is a viable use for the building in this city centre location, but is also flexible enough that they could also be adapted for other uses should they be demanded in the future.

Long disused, the current proposals will revitalise this prominent location, while also facilitating the conservation and upgrade of the landmark HQ building. The proposals are appropriately scaled and sensitively designed, which along with the construction methodologies proposed, will mitigate any impacts on the cultural significance of the buildings and assist in their preservation. The proposals will enhance the architectural heritage value of the site and its surrounds.

The proposed works comprise development which does not materially affect the nineteenth-century historic character of those parts of the protected structure (Connolly Station) within the subject site, or the character of adjacent structures within the curtilage of the station including any element that contributes to its special architectural, historical, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

The proposed works to the facades of the former station hall will significantly improve the public realm along Amiens Street while also enhancing the setting of the protected structure comprising of the viaduct vaults and the rest of the Connolly Station complex. Adapting the building for a viable new use as offices for Iarnród Éireann will help preserve this interesting site and allow its impressive vaults to be appreciated by its users and those passing by, reinstating some vitality to this dilapidated but prominent pocket along one of the principal thoroughfares of the city.