

# HQ

## Industrial Archaeology Survey Stationmaster's Building



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## Building 2: Passenger Station

This building is located between the goods shed and Railway Street (fig.1).

### Summary

A single-storey/ four-bay former passenger station designed by Sir John Benson and opened by the Great Southern & Western Railway in 1856 (fig.2). The building was originally much longer, with a Doric colonnade along its west side and canopied platform at east. It was superseded by a new passenger station in 1893. The colonnade and platform canopy were removed in the later 1800s and the building truncated to its present length during the 1900s.

A return and lean-to extension were added in the earlier 1900s when the building was refurbished as offices. It now has a pitched artificial slate roof with ashlar chimneys, cement-rendered brick walls with a moulded stucco string course and window heads. The building was latterly used as a staff canteen and stores.

Along with the Carriage Shed, this building is now a Protected Structure (Cork City Council PS 178).

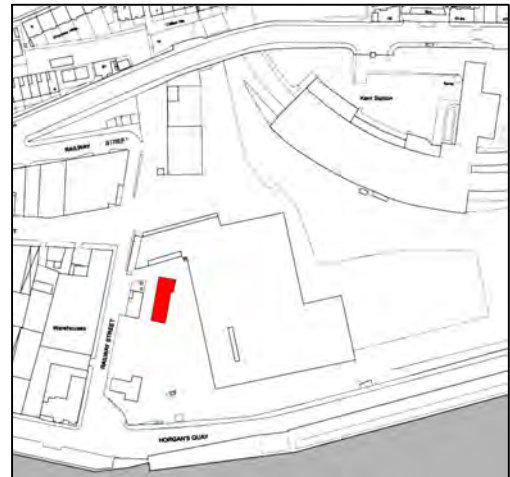


Fig.1 Location of Passenger Station.



Fig.2 Passenger Station from SE.

### History

Rail services between Dublin and Cork began in October 1849 but stopped at Kilbarry Station, Blackrock, some 2km north of the intended terminus at Penrose Quay. It was to be another six years before the tunnel between Blackrock and the Quay was completed and services from the extended line commenced in December 1855. As the new passenger station was still under construction, the goods shed acted as a temporary terminus until the new one was finally opened on 28 July 1856. It was designed by Sir John Benson and constructed by John J. Bagnell.

John Benson (1812-1874) was County Engineer for the East Riding of Co Cork from 1846 to 1855, Consulting Engineer to the Cork Harbour Commissioners from 1848, and Cork City Engineer from 1854. He was also the Architect for the National Exhibition held in Cork in 1852, and the Dublin Great Industrial Exhibition of 1853, for which he was knighted. He was also involved with various railways including the Cork & Macroom, Cork & Limerick, Cork & Passage Junction, and Cork & Kinsale. His numerous architectural commissions in Cork City included a remodelling of the Butter Market (1849), Antheaeum (1854), Cork Waterworks (1859), and St Patrick's Bridge (1861).

The dimensions of the new station are given in the 1857 Valuation book as: Carriage entrance - 195ft x 36ft, Waiting rooms etc - 195ft x 24ft, and Platform - 195ft x 60ft. The extent of the new structure was therefore 195ft x 120ft (59.4m x 36.6m).

The *Builder* of 17 January 1857 elaborates on the new station thus: "It consists of arrivals and departures platforms, waiting rooms, with the usual offices, a convenient space for cabs and omnibuses, so that passengers can be taken up or sit down under cover; this is a colonnade, 200ft long and 30ft wide at each end, and 43ft wide by 80ft in length at centre. There are 20 columns 14ft 6in high supporting the roof. The entablature is plain, with block-in course and a low attic to screen the roof."

The *Dublin Builder* of 1 July 1860 also noted that due to the marshy nature of the ground, the building required 600 beech piles each averaging 24ft long. The platform roof had a clear span of 62ft and was of iron and timber. This article is also accompanied by a drawing of the new station (fig.3).

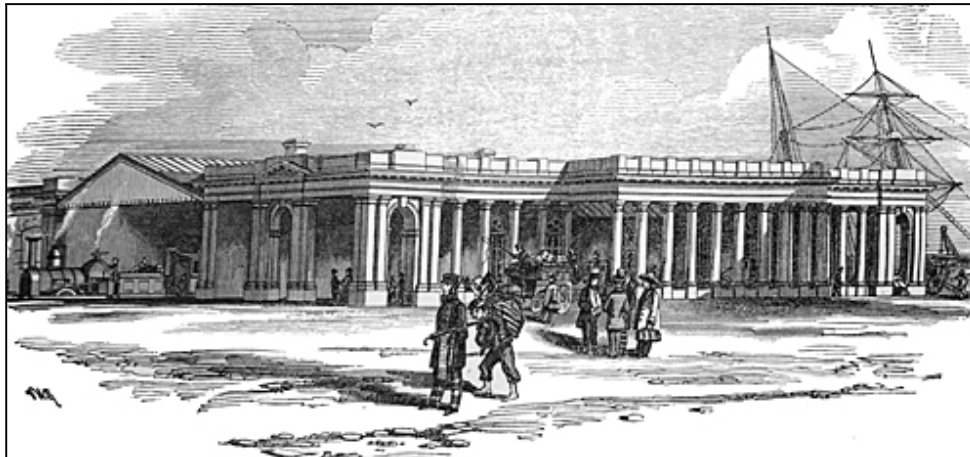


Fig.3 Passenger Station from NW as depicted in the *Dublin Builder*, July 1860.

The Irish Architectural Archive holds a book of unsigned/ undated architectural drawings showing the detailing of the new building (fig.4). The central section of the entrance was spanned with timber queen-post trusses and the rest of the colonnade with simple triangular trusses. The roof of the office block comprised king-post trusses, and the platforms were covered with wrought-iron trusses.

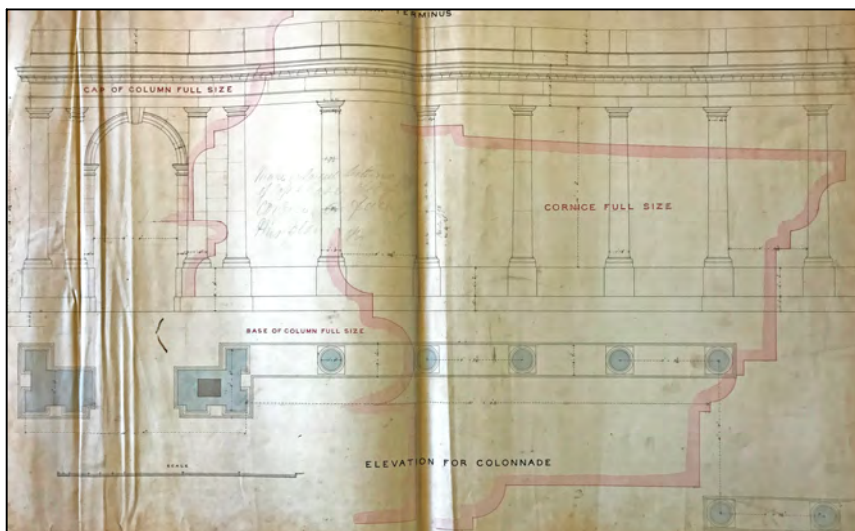
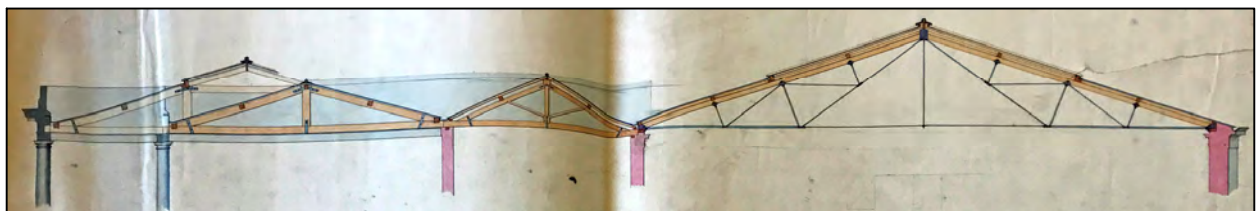


Fig.4 Above: Roof detailing of entrance colonnade (left), offices etc (middle), and platform (right).

Left: Elevation of entrance colonnade and section through entablature.

(Irish Architectural Archive: ICEI Collection, Acc.2005/95.IEI 5366).

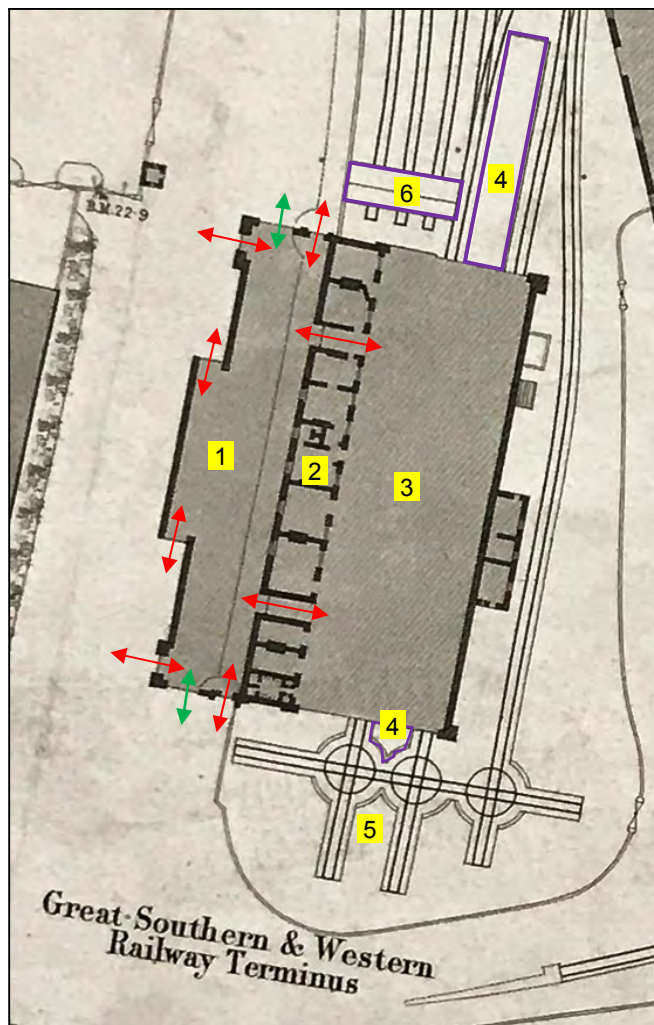


Benson's design was one of several proposals for the Cork terminus. Whether it was put out to a competitive design is uncertain, but a drawing in the Irish Railway Record Society shows a proposal for an even larger passenger station tight against the NW corner of the GS&WR premises, with the colonnaded central section of its façade approximately facing the end of Railway Street (fig.5).

With an overall footprint of 507ft x 245ft, it was over four times the area of the one erected.

In reality, the new station was located towards the SW end of the premises, with an unassuming entrance gateway at the end of Alfred Street and another off Penrose Quay.

Fig.5 Dimensioned plan of station which was never built (IRRS).

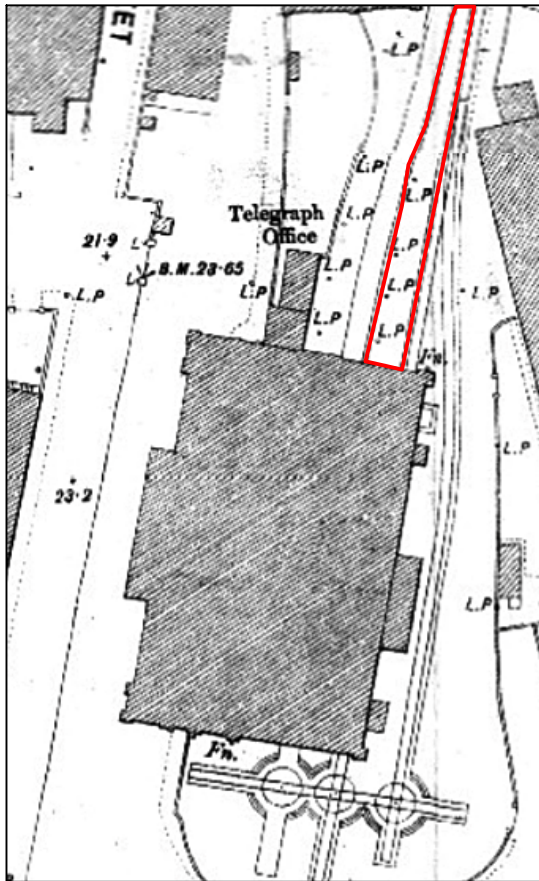


The internal layout of the new station block is shown on the 1869 OS map (fig.6). The main section between the portico and platforms comprised 13 bays, two of which were through passages. The other bays would have been the ticket office, staff offices, public waiting rooms and toilets, and parcel office etc. The departures platform was behind the offices and to the east was an island platform for arrivals. Three turntables just beyond the south end of the block were used to reverse the direction of the locos.

Fig.6 Annotated 1869 OS map of passenger station block. Key:

- 1 - Entrance colonnade.
- 2 - Ticket office, staff offices, public waiting rooms and toilets, parcel office etc.
- 3- Canopy over platforms and lines.
- 4 - Island platform.
- 5 - Turntables.
- 6 - Traverser (for carriage shed rolling stock).

The pedestrian and carriage entrances are arrowed in red and green respectively.



The 1892 OS map shows an identical footprint to 1869, but with the addition of several small buildings, including a telegraph office, at its north end (fig.7). It also shows the island platform to have been extended northwards to nearly double its original length; according to Creedon, this occurred in 1873.

Fig.7 1892 OS map of passenger station. The enlarged island platform is outlined in red.

Two later 1800s photographs of Penrose Quay show the various elements of the station block (fig.8). Compared with the façade, the platform section was relatively plain, albeit with a decorative ashlar pier at its SE corner.

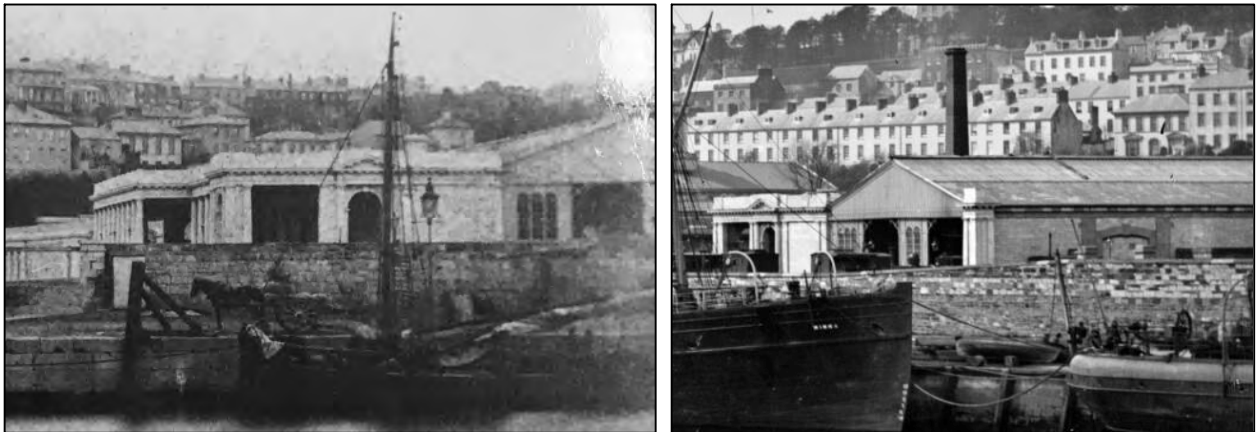


Fig.8 Later 19th century depictions of Station Building. *Left:* View from SW showing entrance facade at left, offices etc at middle (plain gable), and canopied platform at right (*Irish Architectural Archive, 38/16V8*). *Right:* View from SE showing gables of façade and offices at left, and platform area at middle/right (*National Library Ireland: Lawrence Collection 2832*).

When the new passenger terminus opened on 1 February 1893, the original one was closed. Its various rooms were subsequently (1895-96 according to Creedon) converted into engineers' offices, the turntables replaced with buffers and the island platform widened for the offloading of livestock. The colonnade and platform canopy were both removed at the same time. The 1900 map shows the results of these alterations (fig.9), as do two early 20th century photographs (fig.10).

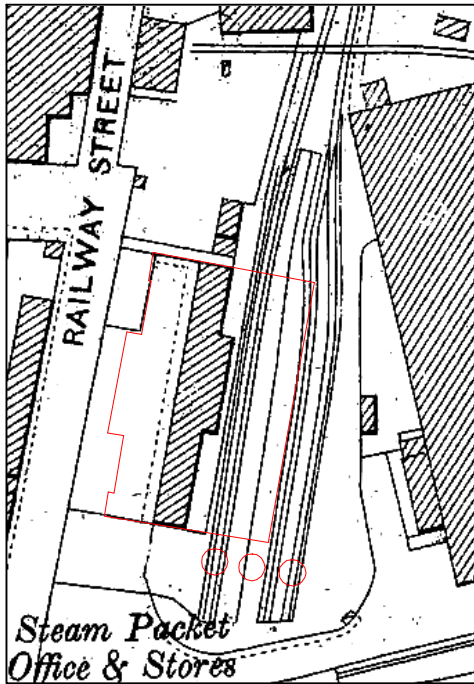
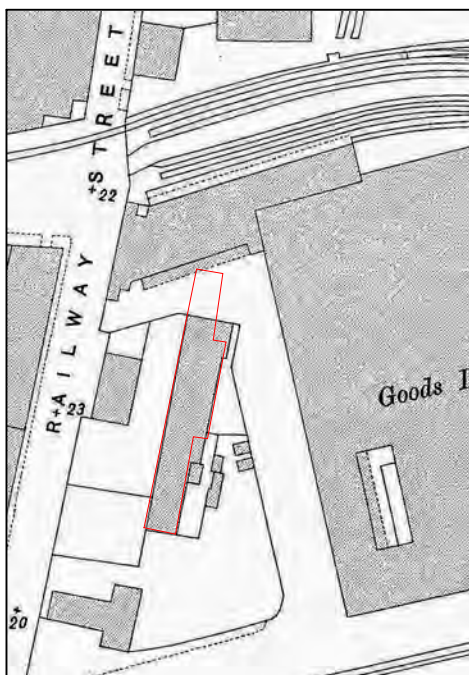


Fig.9 1900 OS map of former passenger station. The footprint of the original block is outlined in red for comparative purposes, along with the sites of the three turntables.



Fig.10 Early 1900s views of Penrose Quay showing former passenger terminus behind boundary wall. *Left:* The colonnade is now absent from the left side of the gable to the office section (NLI: Fergus O'Connor Collection). *Right:* With the removal of the canopy, the arched opes along the east side of the offices are now clearly visible (NLI: Lawrence Collection 5745).



With the extension of the goods shed and addition of the Guinness Depot at its NW corner in the 1910s, it was necessary to remove the north end of the station building. At the same time, an extension was built along its east side and a return added at its NE corner. This alteration is clearly shown on the 1927 OS map; the building is both shorter and wider than on the 1900 map (fig.11).

Fig.11 1927 map depiction of former station building. Its 1900 footprint is outlined in red.

The same footprint is shown on the 1950 OS map, but the 1973 edition shows the southern half of the building to have been removed to give the building its present form; Creedon says this happened in the early 1970s (fig.12). No further changes are apparent on the 1983 OS map. In later years, the building was used as a staff canteen and stores.

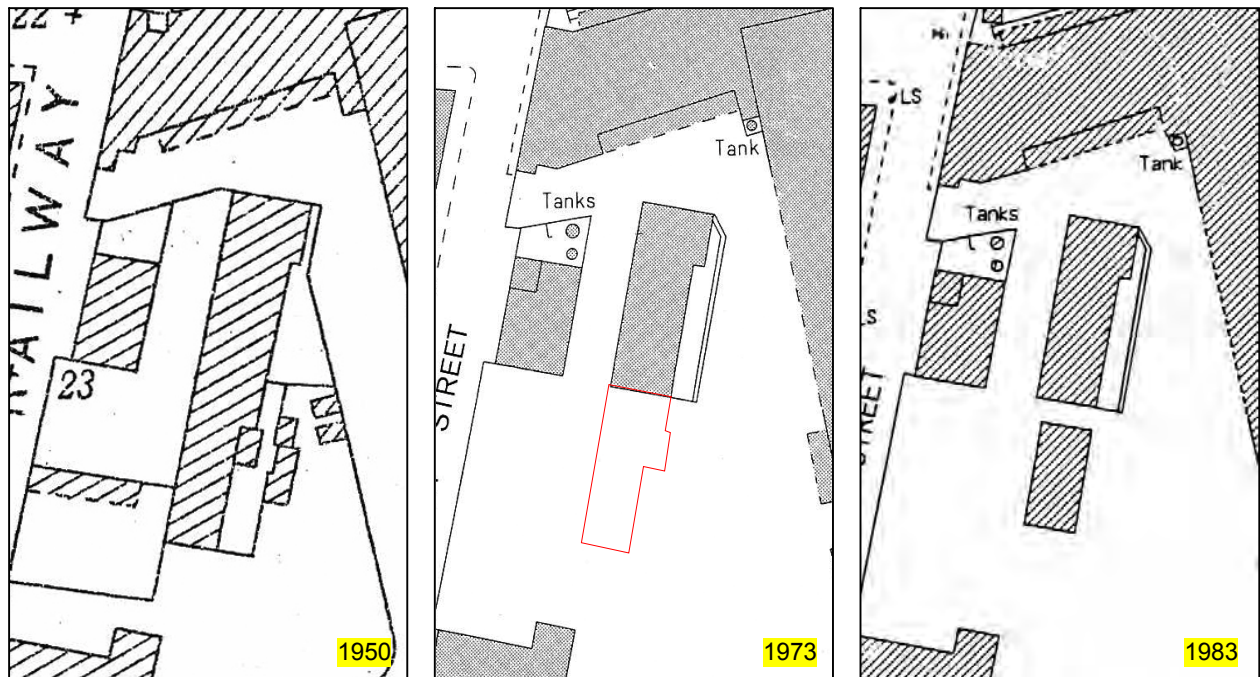


Fig.12 OS map depictions of former passenger station, 1950-1983. The section removed after 1950 is outlined in red on the 1973 map.

#### Primary references:

1. *Cork Constitution*, 18 Oct 1849.
2. Architectural drawings of original station building in Irish Architectural Archive: ICEI Collection, Acc.2005/95 IEI 5366.
3. *Cork Constitution*, 3 Jan 1855.
4. *The Builder*, 17 Jan 1857 (vol.15, p.38).
5. *Dublin Builder*, 1 July 1860 (vol.2, pp 295 and 297).
6. 1869 OS 1:1056 map Cork City sheet 74-46.
7. Obituary of Sir John Benson in *The Building News*, 23 Oct 1874 (vol.27, p.509).
8. 1892 OS 1:1056 map Cork City sheet 74-46.
9. *Irish Builder*, 15 Feb 1893 (vol.35, p.47).
10. Late 19th and early 20th century photographs in Irish Architectural Archive (Cork City, Penrose Quay: 38/16V8) and National Library of Ireland (Lawrence Collection: 2832 and 5745; also Fergus O'Connor Collection).
11. 1900 OS 1:2500 map, County Series Co Cork sheet 74-07.
12. 1927 OS 1:1056 map Cork City sheet 74-46.
13. 1950 OS 1:1250 map, County Series sheet 74-07C.
14. 1973 OS 1:1000 map, Irish Grid sheet 6383-06.
15. 1983 OS 1:1000 map, Irish Grid sheet 6383-06.

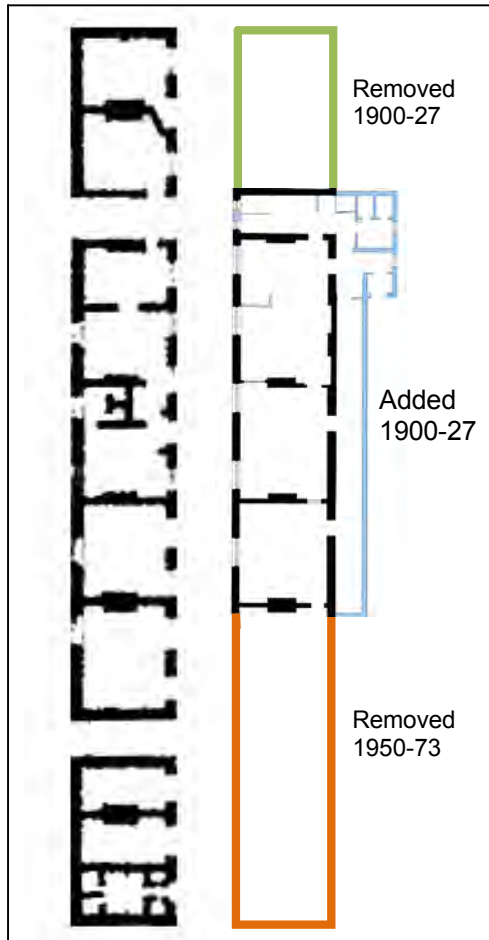
#### Secondary references:

1. C. Creedon (1985), *Cork City Railway Stations, 1849-1965: An Illustrated History*, pp 24-29.
2. Colin Rynne (1999), *The Industrial Archaeology of Cork City and its Environs*, p.209 (Dublin: Stationery Office).

## Features

### 1. Remains of original building

Comparison of the layout of the present building with that on the 1869 map shows that two of the original 13 bays at the north end have been removed together with five at south. The surviving six bays comprise just under half (47%) of the building's original overall length (fig.13).



The bay at the north end of the present building contains staff toilets and it is evident that this space was originally a passageway between the portico and platform. Some internal party walls appear to have been removed and existing ones modified and new ones inserted.

The lean-to and return added to the building's east side in 1900-27 are of no special historical or architectural merit and detract from its original character.

Fig.13 Left: Enlarged floor plan as shown on 1869 map (*left*) and evolution of existing building (*right*).

### 2. External features

#### *Roof*

Although the roof appears to have been renewed with artificial slates, the original ashlar limestone chimneys survive, as do the internal chimney breasts. The internal roof spaces were not inspected, but it is possible that the original king-post trusses survive.

#### *Walls*

Although the original gables were probably of ashlar limestone (based on the photographic evidence), the existing gables on the truncated building and possibly also its side walls may be of cement-rendered brick.

#### *Openings*

All the surviving round-headed openings are undoubtedly original, the majority being windows. Some appear to have been partly or wholly infilled, or enlarged to create doorways.

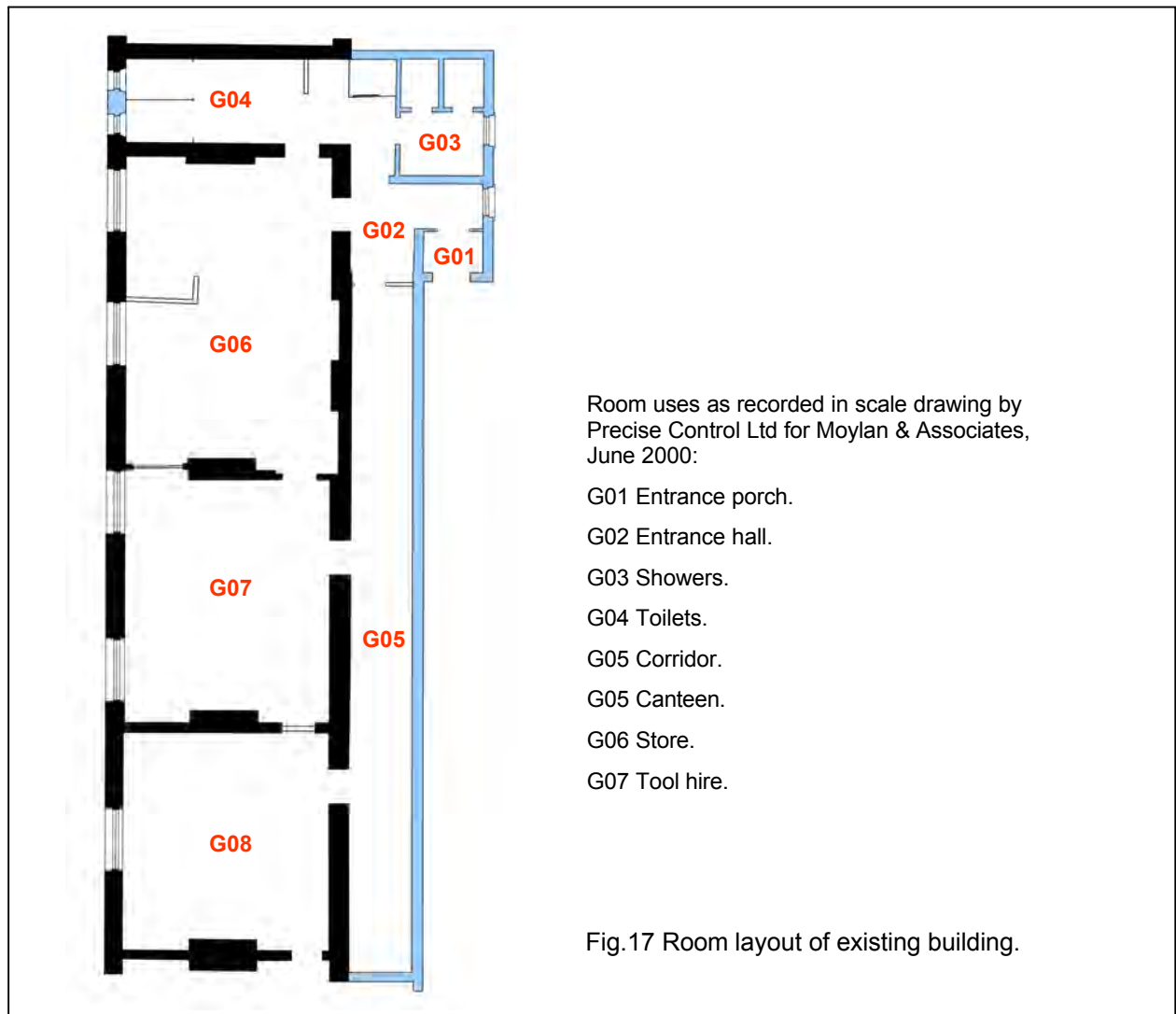


### 3. Internal features

The internal layout of the present building is shown in fig.14. The shower room in the return (room G03) and toilets in the original passageway (G04) were inaccessible at the time of survey.

The main features of note in the accessible rooms are:

- The cream and red floor tiling in the entrance porch, hall and corridor (rooms G01, G02, and G04).
- The original semicircular margined windows and chimney breasts in rooms G06-G08.



### Recommendations

1. Investigate roof space and record original trusses if still surviving.
2. Remove small areas of render from the external walls to determine their fabric.
3. Remove small areas of plaster from the internal walls below the semicircular opens to determine whether they were windows or doorways originally.