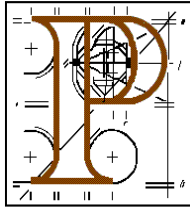


An Bord Pleanála



Inspector's Report

Appeal Reference No: PL29S.246098

Development: The dismantling and deconstruction of the existing Telephone Exchange Building for its storage at the Inchicore Stores Building (within the curtilage of a Protected Structure) at Inchicore Rail Works, Inchicore.

Planning Application

Planning Authority: Dublin City Council

Planning Authority Reg. Ref.: 3929/15

Applicant: Iarnród Éireann

Planning Authority Decision: Refuse Permission

Planning Appeal

Appellant(s): Iarnród Éireann

Type of Appeal: First Party

Observers: None

Date of Site Inspection: 4th of May 2016

Inspector: Angela Brereton

1.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The property is located and accessed in the Irish Rail yard at Inchicore. This is to the west of the residential area of Inchicore Terrace South and accessed via Inchicore Parade at the end of St. Patrick's Terrace. The railway line runs to the north of the site. The Plans submitted show the small area of the building in the context of the other buildings within the Inchicore Works Compound and as shown on the land ownership map. While there are many older more historic buildings within the landholding, there are also some more recently built. The Iarnród Éireann site is fully operational and has a security gated entrance and on-site parking.

This is a detached stone/timber/slate building and there are two main rooms with connecting hallway. This small building is now cordoned off with security barriers and does not appear to be operational. It is adjacent to a pond area which also provides a water supply in case of fire. It is seen in the context of the grouping of older buildings and the green area to the north.

2.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This proposal is for the dismantling and deconstruction of the existing Telephone Exchange Building, for its storage at the Inchicore Stores Building.

The application form provides that the site area relative to this building is 60sq.m, and the building for dismantling and future reassembly is 24.5sq.m.

A Site Location Map and a Land Ownership Map has been submitted showing the building in the context of the total landholding. A Site Layout Map and floor plans and elevations have also been submitted.

A description of the Telephone Exchange Building and its history and context has been given by Séan Dockry & Associates, Architects, Designers, Project Managers, RIAI Grade III Conservation Architects.

A Building Inspection Survey by Lally Engineering Services has been included (dated 2nd of February 2015).

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- Reg.Ref.0075/15 – A Section 5 Exemption Certificate was refused by Dublin City Council for the demolition of the Telephone Exchange Building.

A copy of the Documentation submitted with that application is included in the Appendix to this Report.

4.0 PLANNING AUTHORITY APPLICATION

Planning and Technical Reports

Waste Management Services recommends a number of conditions relative to Construction and Demolition Waste and on-site storage.

The Archaeology Section considers that there are no archaeological requirements.

The Engineering Department Drainage Division has no objections subject to standard conditions.

The Conservation Officer has a number of concerns and recommends refusal as they consider that the demolition will undermine the overall significance of the site and remove a key building.

The Planner's Report had regard to the locational context, the Technical Reports, the concerns expressed in the Conservation Officer's Report and to Planning History and Policy. They noted that the Inchicore Works compound is of considerable historical significance and had regard to the context and setting of the Telephone Exchange Building. They considered that while this is not a Protected Structure that adequate justification has not been given for this proposal and that it is not in the interests of the building or its historical setting within the wider context and recommended refusal.

5.0 PLANNING AUTHORITY DECISION

On the 25th of January 2016 Dublin City Council recommended refusal for the following reason:

The proposed demolition of this nineteenth century building, which forms part of a complex of buildings of significant heritage value, would undermine the overall significance of the site and remove a key building within the overall CIE Works complex. The proposal, which does not provide specific information relating to the reconstruction and relocation of the building or adequate justification for the demolition of the building, would therefore be detrimental to the built heritage of the area, would materially affect a protected structure as the Telephone Exchange Building is located within the curtilage of the principal Protected Structures on site, thus being contrary to the provisions of the current Dublin City Development Plan (2011-2017) including Section 17.10.5 in relation to the reuse of older buildings of significance and to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

6.0 GROUNDS OF APPEAL

Seán Dockry & Associates has submitted an appeal on behalf of the First Party, Iarnród Éireann. Their grounds of appeal include the following:

- They consider that the Council's decision to refuse has misinterpreted the application as simple demolition, and provide that this proposal is for deconstruction, not demolition and disposal.
- The proposal is to dismantle and for deconstruction and storage for its reconstruction within the Iarnród Éireann rail network at another yet undetermined site.
- Currently the building has been disused for many years and has suffered serious dilapidation and progressive defects.
- The building is now in a dangerous condition as a result of serious progressive structural subsidence.

- The aspiration and requirement of the applicant is to save and reinstate this building, but at a different location within the overall rail network.
- They do not consider that this is a key building within the overall complex and that its removal would be detrimental to the built heritage of the area.
- They provide a description of the context of the building and note that it was a later addition to the complex.
- They contend that the relocation of this building would not have a significant impact on the built heritage of the area and is not of any relevance to the principle Protected Structure.
- They provide a justification for its reconstruction and relocation.
- They note that discussion has been ongoing and a specific site for its relocation has not yet been determined and provide some examples of a possible future use for the building.
- The applicant wants to salvage and reuse this building in an appropriate location where it is needed and provides a function.
- They have regard to the living heritage as a historic industrial complex and provide details relative to the Inchicore Works Complex sustainability.
- Regard is had to interpretation of the Heritage Act and the Development Plan regarding the continued sustainable usage of such complexes.
- The entire Inchicore Works Complex is an active industrial site and needs to remain as such.
- It has constantly evolved to serve the arising needs of the rail services. This recognises the changing needs of buildings and the special needs in this case the relocation of this building.
- This requirement needs to be balanced with the need to protect the heritage of the area and the setting and character of the P.S.
- Overall plans for the Complex under active consideration include its being a principal element for Dart Underground.
- This building is not a P.S. and is in a state of progressive subsidence and dilapidation due to it being redundant and badly built.
- Significant investment would be required to attempt to underpin and arrest its collapse. It would be preferable to dismantle and reconstruct this building to enable it to serve a required use which they consider sustainable.
- They consider that this would comply with Section 17.10.5 of the DCDP i.e for the reuse of older buildings.
- In conclusion they believe that this proposal is pursuant to the long-term reuse and protection of this building.
- They consider that this proposal is not detrimental to the curtilage or setting of the Protected Structures on this site and facilitates the protection of this building and is entirely consistent with the sustainable development of the area.

7.0 RESPONSES TO GROUNDS OF APPEAL

Dublin City Council has not responded to the grounds of appeal.

8.0 POLICY CONTEXT

8.1 Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017

This includes a number of policies and objectives relative to the site.

Section 7.2 refers to Built Heritage. FC27 seeks: *The preservation of the built heritage of the city that makes a positive contribution to the character, appearance and quality of local streetscapes and the sustainable development of the city.*

Section 7.2.5.2 refers to Protected Structures and the Built Heritage. FC30 includes: *To protect these structures, their curtilage and the setting from any works that would cause loss or damage to their special character.*

FC31 seeks: *To maintain and enhance the potential of protected structures and other buildings of architectural/historic merit to contribute to the cultural character and identity of the place, including identifying appropriate viable contemporary uses.*

Policy FC37 seeks: *To consider new uses which are compatible with the character of protected structures.*

Chapter 15 refers to Land Use Zoning and as shown on Map D the site is located within Zone 6 where as provided in Section 15.10.6 the objective is to: *To provide for the creation and protection of enterprise and facilitate opportunities for employment creation.*

Chapter 17 provides the 'Development Standards' including regard to sustainable site and building design and relative to Protected Structures, Conservation Areas and ACAs .

Section 17.10 provides the Development Standards for Works to a Protected Structure. This includes that a detailed conservation method statement shall accompany planning applications for works to protected structures and details are given of the criteria for this. Also that all works to protected structures shall be carried out in accordance with best conservation practice.

Section 17.10.2 refers to criteria for works for development within the curtilage of a Protected Structure including that the design of new development, should relate to and compliment the special character of the protected structure.

Section 17.10.5 refers to Retention and Re-Use of Older Buildings of Significance which are not Protected.

Section 17.10.8 refers to Development in Conservations Areas and ACAs.
Appendix 10 refers to Protected Structures and buildings within Conservation Areas.
Appendix 11 refers to Proposed Architectural Conservation Areas.

8.2 Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the DoEHLG in 2004/2011

This has regard to development within Protected Structures and within an ACA. A Protected Structure includes the interior of the structure and all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior and within the curtilage of the structure. An ACA is used to protect groups of structures of distinctiveness or visual richness or historical importance including the setting of Protected Structures where it is more extensive than its curtilage.

Chapter 2 refers to the Record of Protected Structures in the Development Plan and has regard also to those buildings within the curtilage of a P.S. Section 2.5.15 includes regard to Industrial Heritage.

Chapter 3 includes regard to ACAs and regard is had to Categories of Special interest, Architectural interest and to the historical interest and character of the area.

Chapter 6 provides policies and objectives for Development Control, which seek to ensure the protection of the architectural heritage so that these structures retain their character and special interest and continue to contribute to the social and economic mix of the area. This also relates to the sensitivity of works within the curtilage of protected structures and attendant grounds and/or ACAs. The sensitive restoration of the character of a Protected Structure is also supported. Section 6.7.7 provides: *In the case of the industrial heritage this may present particular problems, and expert advice should be sought, for example from the Industrial Heritage Association of Ireland.*

Part 2 includes Detailed Guidance Notes relative to works to the Interior and Exterior and Access to Protected Structures. Chapter 9 refers to Roofs and Chapter 10 refers to Openings: Doors and Windows.

Chapter 13 refers to Development within the Curtilage and Attendant Grounds. Section 13.1.1 provides: *By definition, a protected structure includes the land lying within the curtilage of the protected structure and other structures within that curtilage and their interiors.*

Section 13.2.1 provides: *The attendant grounds of a structure are lands outside the curtilage of the structure but which are associated with the structure and are intrinsic to its function, setting and/or appreciation.*

Section 13.3.1 provides: *Features within the curtilage and attendant grounds of a protected structure can make a significant contribution to the character of that structure.*

Section 13.5 refers to Development within the Curtilage of a Protected Structure and has regard to the relationship between ancillary buildings within the curtilage and attendant grounds.

Chapter 16 refers to Making Good Disaster Damage. This includes regard in S.16.5 to Reinstatement of Interiors where the external shell of the building remains substantially intact.

9.0 ASSESSMENT

9.1 Principle of Development and Planning Policy

As shown on Land Use Zoning Map D of the Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017 the Inchicore Railway Works site which includes the subject building is located in Zone 6. The objective has been noted in the policy section above and Section 15.10.6 includes: *It is considered that Z6 lands constitute an important land bank for employment use in the city which it is considered strategically important to protect.*

Section 17.10.5 refers to Retention and Re-Use of Older Buildings of Significance which are not Protected. This includes: *In assessing applications to demolish older buildings which are not protected, the planning authority will actively seek the retention and re-use of buildings/structures of historic, architectural, cultural, artistic and/or local interest or buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and identity of streetscapes and the sustainable development of the city.*

The First Party provides that this proposal is not for the demolition of the structure which it is noted is not a Protected Structure, but rather for its dismantling as the use of the building is now redundant and it is suffering from subsidence and falling into disrepair in this location. Initially it is proposed for storage but in the long term, reuse in as yet an undefined location, which they consider will ultimately facilitate the protection of this building and is entirely consistent with the sustainable development of the area.

While this is a small building it is seen in the context of the Protected Structures that form part of the larger Inchicore Works Compound. Regard is also had to the 'Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities' issued by the DoEHLG in 2004/2011. Section 2.2.2 provides: *Structures located within the curtilage of a protected structure are also protected along with their interiors, fixtures and features.* Section 3.3.11 provides: *The special technical interest of an area may derive from its association with industrial heritage areas or landscapes such as harbours, ports, railways and canals.* Section 7.2.5.8 of the DCDP 2011-2017 also has regard to the importance of Industrial Heritage. Regard is had to the implications of the proposed development having regard to its locational context in this Assessment below.

9.2 Regard to History of the Site and the Building

Historical information provides that Inchicore, west of Dublin's city centre, is the principal locomotive and carriage works of Irish Rail, where locomotives, diesel railcars and rolling stock are maintained. Built by the Great Southern & Western Railway in 1846 with the opening of their mainline from Dublin to Carlow, Inchicore is the largest single industrial complex in Ireland, and includes one of the last remaining active locomotive sheds on Irish Rail, as well as a turntable. For over 150 years, Inchicore has witnessed the building, assembly and maintenance of many generations of steam and diesel motive power. With the setting up of the Great Southern Railways in 1925, and later CIE's formation in 1945, the works became the principal location for the overhaul of rolling stock, while other smaller workshops around the country were run down and closed altogether.

The Great Southern & Western Railway's architect, Sacton Wood, designed many of the older buildings on site including the castelled styled works at Inchicore in 1846, as well as the 'look out' tower. The similarly castelled styled GSWR signal cabin at Inchicore, located on the up side of the line was taken out of use in 2002. It is provided that it is unlikely that he designed the Telephone Exchange Building but noted that the buildings do however follow a similar style which was likely dictated by his training and experience.

Details have been submitted with the application, relative to the history of the works compound and this includes regard to Historic Mapping. This shows that a number of the more historic buildings were constructed between 1843 -1866. The 1889 map shows further buildings including general stores, timber stores, the Foundry and Exchange Building. This notes that in its heyday Inchicore employed c.1,800 in various trades. Also that currently the Works maintains its position as the largest and most important engineering facilities in Irish railways and it is one of the few original surviving railway compounds anywhere in the world. The works remain today a vital element of the transport infrastructure of the state, and a model of evolving history that remains sustainable and important.

A list is provided of buildings within the overall compound which includes the Telephone Exchange Building. The subject building while in the curtilage is itself not included as a Protected Structure. The information submitted provides that this particular building may be considered of low significance in comparison to the other, more important buildings on site. While it appears first on the 1877 layout drawing, the first direct reference is reportedly in 1885 when the first telephone call from Knightsbridge to The Works was recorded. It is noted that the current building does appear to be original. However it was not built or designed with the same quality reserved for some of the more significant buildings on site. Its design is simple and un-ornate. The construction involved the use of an inferior limestone ashlar finish unlike that used in the more important buildings. It appears to have been built between 1860 and 1877.

It is concluded that the Inchicore Works compound is of considerable significance from a historic point of view. The Works are an active industrial site in continuous use since its founding and establishment and operates for the same original purpose.

9.3 Description of the Telephone Exchange Building

As shown on the Plans submitted the building is a small two roomed structure, with a central chimney breast. The plan comprises a small lobby at the entrance centrally on the north side and a room on the east and west side of the central wall and chimney. An open fire place is evident to the west room. Both rooms have windows either side (north and south) but the building has no windows or openings to the shorted east and west elevations. The roof is low hipped design and details are provided of the roof finish and materials are noted to be natural blue Bangor Slate (or similar). The external walls are constructed with an ashlar lime stone construction, which on examination it is provided appears to be cut from poor quality limestone.

Regard is had to more recent mortar repair work. It is noted that the stonework included flat segmented five stone arches over windows and seven piece over the entrance. The cills appear to be cut from granite stone. Internally the lobby floor has large flags of granite stones. The west room has a cast iron fire surround. Ceilings are lath and plaster. Windows are mostly original with simple architrave mouldings. The floor is suspended timber construction

It is provided that there is a wide variety of stone types and quality used throughout the compound with the better quality stone reserved for the more important, more monumental, buildings and poor quality for lesser buildings e.g. The Telephone Exchange Building, The Sand House and various store sheds. More recent works on other buildings involved the use of cast replica 'stone' made in single type moulds with concrete. Details submitted provide that the Telephone Exchange Building is of low significance in the context of The Compound but that in view of its context it should ideally not be demolished and disposed of.

9.4 The Condition of the Telephone Exchange Building

The information submitted by Séan Dockry Associates provides that ground levels around the walls are unlikely to be as originally constructed, particularly the east side appears to have been altered (raised) and this may have contributed to the deterioration and now poor state of the structure. The roof is damaged and poorly repaired and it is noted that there is extensive repair over the years with fibrous cement and possibly asbestos cement slates. It is provided that the roof structure is not sound and is collapsing on the east side of the structure. Generally stonework on the exterior is in good condition with the exception of areas altered for drilling of pipes, ducts etc. The openings are propped to prevent collapse on both south windows and the main entrance. Details are also given of damage that has occurred internally. This includes that there does not appear to be any original telephone exchange equipment, however there are a number of 'Com's box' more recent telecommunication elements which appear to be redundant. This also notes that the cast iron fireplace does not appear to have been damaged.

A Building Inspection Report which includes photographs showing the internal and external condition of the building has also been submitted. This recommends that in view of the poor state of the building, including regard to issues of subsidence that it should be demolished.

It is provided that the Telephone Exchange Building is without special features or special particular workmanship quality. It is in a derelict subsiding state of advanced dilapidation. It has no clear function or use. The First Party consider that it would be unsuitable for retention given the works required to correct the subsidence and deterioration and lack of purpose.

9.5 Regard to Conservation issues

The Conservation Officer in Dublin City Council has regard to the overall significance of the Industrial complex which may be regarded as displaying several of the national inventory of architectural heritage (NIAH) criteria – archaeological,

architectural, social, scientific, technical and cultural significance. They consider that the crafting of the Telephone Exchange Building should not be overlooked and that the removal of one of the more modest buildings within the overall context of the other historic buildings is not supported. They provide that this would remove one of the key buildings within the curtilage of the Protected Structures in terms of its former use and function. This ancillary structure had a central communication role within this overall complex and this was integral to the function of the site.

The Conservation Principles provide that it is generally recognised that the best method of conserving a historic building is to keep it in active use. They are concerned that sufficient justification has not been given for its removal and that the proposal for demolition and re-building elsewhere is unlikely to happen where potential re-use has not been identified to date. They consider that the building merits conservation and is currently fully repairable where timely intervention was to be considered and urgent remedial works undertaken. They recommend refusal as they are concerned that the demolition will undermine the overall significance of the site and remove a key building. This view was also taken in the Planner's Report relative to the historic significance of the structure within the context of overall complex.

Section 13.1.5 of the Architectural Heritage Guidelines has regard to whether there is a functional connection between the structures, the historical relationship and whether they are all in the same ownership. Section 13.9 refers to Moving Protected Structures and notes that there is a close relationship between a P.S and its location and setting. There is concern that dismantling a structure can damage its fabric. S.13.9.2 provides: *Proposals to move a protected structure, or features within the curtilage or attendant grounds of a protected structure, should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. The planning authority should be satisfied that every alternative has been properly explored and that relocation is essential to safeguard the structure.*

The First Party provide that in view of the advanced dilapidated condition, derelict state and progressive subsidence and redundant use of the building on its current siting that it is in order to dismantle it for initial storage and future safe reconstruction and sustainable use in an alternative suitable location. They note that discussion has been ongoing and that a specific site has not as yet been determined. They provide a number of possible uses and note that the applicant wants to salvage and reuse this building in an appropriate location where it is needed and provides a function.

9.6 Impact on the Character of the Area

Having viewed the building on site, it is noted that it has been designed as a subsidiary but complimentary smaller building in the overall grouping of the older more historic buildings in proximity. This is particularly so in views looking eastwards down the avenue where the profile of the structure lines up with the two storey buildings to the east and appears to follow a building line. Also, looking southwards across the pond area, where the lower roof profile is seen in context of the larger two storey building to the south. When viewed looking westwards it continues the line of

buildings along the avenue and could be seen to form a focal point from the green area. While in need of urgent renovation, the structure of the building, i.e the external stone walls, ornate slate roof, windows are in situ. Internally while obviously in need of substantial overhaul, there are two rooms and a fireplace and it is not difficult to envisage the original usage of the building. There is still some telecommunications equipment on the wall of one of the rooms.

Therefore it is considered that visually this building forms part of the complex of the older buildings in this area, some of which are Protected Structures. It is part of the overall industrial heritage of the area. As a Telephone Exchange Building it would have been a key communications building within the complex.

While the First Party has provided that it is not proposed to demolish the building rather its storage, reconstruction and ultimate relocation where it can be used elsewhere, no specific location or definite usage has been specified. Therefore there is concern that if permission is granted for this proposal that there is no obligation to re-use the building and that there is a possibility that it will remain in storage. While the building is said to be redundant in its current location it does not appear that much consideration has been given to any possible use to determine its long term survival in situ within the compound.

In view of the significance of this building within the curtilage of the Protected Structures and having regard to its setting and former use within the historical industrial heritage context of the site it is considered that it would be preferable to renovate this building and to allow it to remain in situ as part of the overall grouping of historic buildings which add to the character in this area. Therefore it is considered that its removal would not be justified in the context of Section 17.10.5 of the DCDP 2011-2017.

9.7 Appropriate Assessment

Having regard to the nature and scale of the development proposed and to the nature of the receiving environment, namely an urban and fully serviced location, no appropriate assessment issues arise.

10.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Having regard to the documentation submitted, including the First Party Grounds of Appeal, planning policy and the history of the site including this small building which forms part of the Industrial Heritage of the larger Inchicore Rail Works complex, and to the Assessment above, it is considered that the proposed development would result in the removal of a building of some historical significance and would detract from the character and curtilage of the adjacent Protected Structures. It is also considered that adequate justification has not been given for its removal and noted that a specific location for its relocation has not been given.

It is therefore recommended that permission be refused for the reasons and considerations below.

11.0 REASONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed dismantling and deconstruction of the former nineteenth century Telephone Exchange Building, which is a small compact building which forms part of a larger complex of buildings of significant industrial heritage value at the Inchicore Rail Works compound would remove what was a building of key significance within the overall CIE Works complex. The proposal which does not include adequate justification for the removal of the building or a specific site for its relocation and re-use, would materially impact on the building and its setting and on the character and curtilage of the Protected Structures in proximity to the site. Therefore it would be contrary to the provisions relative to conservation in Section 17.10.5 of the Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017 i.e. 'Retention and Re-Use of Older Buildings of Significance which are not Protected' and to Section 13.9.2 of the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the DoEHLG in 2004/2011.

Angela Brereton,
Planning Inspector,
Date: 9th of May 2016