



CMG Irish Building & Design Award

Refurbishment of 36 Fenian Street, Dublin 2



Guided by conservation philosophy which seeks to do as little as possible, but as much as is necessary, an extensive renovation programme was undertaken. Previous phased works carried out included; re-roofing the natural slate roof, tuck pointing the red brick façade, floor strengthening, structural works to internal walls and replacement of non-original windows. New work was carefully executed to enhance the original character of the early Georgian building.

Internally, trunking and cable trays extended around walls and through original cornices. These were stripped back with new services routed and concealed within vertical risers and floor structure. The design team collaborated closely a specialist lime company to agree an appropriate solution for internal wall repairs using lime plaster and glass fibre mesh to repair decades of cement and gypsum plaster repairs.

A unique architectural feature is the unusual Georgian curved geometric staircase. The decorative balustrades were strengthened, nosing repairs undertaken and the staircase was finished with a carpet runner and a French polished handrail.

Walls were finished with paint and hand-crafted wallpaper. Shelving incorporating audio-visual equipment to the ground and first floor principal rooms will be used for lectures, seminars and as a showcase for the Faculty.

The final building is one that respects the original domestic character of the Georgian residence and provides bespoke student study and office spaces with state of the art IT and building services - befitting for this prestigious and world renowned university.



Rounded cutstone entrance with original fanlight and timber panelled entrance door



Curved geometric stairwell with contemporary and traditional lighting enhancing spatial characteristics



Hand-crafted wallpaper and purpose built-shelving to seminar room

1.1 Design features

The project reinstated many architectural features of a traditional Georgian building whilst meeting client aspirations by providing high quality accommodation for the Centre for Literary Translation. Unsympathetic interventions were removed and original features were restored and enhanced using traditional materials and techniques.

- Traditional wainscoting reinstated in hallway.
- Refurbishment of original windows; replacing non-original windows with traditional sliding sash windows.
- Traditional lime plaster applied to the entrance hall and stairwell to enhance the spatial characteristics of the curved walls and maintain the breathability of external walls.
- Building services integrated into the fabric with riser positions located in back of house areas, retaining original character of the principal rooms.
- Ground and first floor seminar rooms have hand-crafted wallpaper finish and bespoke shelving integrated with state of the art audio-visual equipment – a sensitive marriage between traditional and modern.
- Both traditional and contemporary light fittings used to enhance architectural features.

The refurbishment ensured the original domestic character and appearance of the building was enhanced and brought back to life.



Built-in shelving incorporating state of the art audio-visual equipment, with hand-crafted wallpaper finish and repaired cornice to seminar room



Elegant, contemporary lighting along stairwell emphasising the curved walls

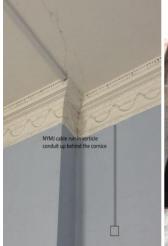
1.2 Innovative use of materials and equipment

Innovative materials and sensitive techniques included:

- Eco-mortar R100 and glass fibre mesh provided a traditional lime finish without the need to remove the existing lime plaster.
- Pre-insulated multilayer heating pipe-work with reduced diameter of 50mm enabling joists to be notched locally flexibility of concealed routes within the floor structure.
- NYM-J cables installed allowing local re-routing around original cornices, minimising risk of damage to the historic fabric.
- Existing floorboards were retained and strengthened with additional joists. Rockwool Flexi insulation was inserted between joists to improve fire performance.



Glass fibre mesh used within Eco-mortar R100 lime plaster to internal walls



Jemm holes through centre of joists for NYMJ & CATE cabling.

NYM-J cable route around existing decorative cornice outlined by electrical contractor during construction



Damage to original cornices due to inappropriate building services integration



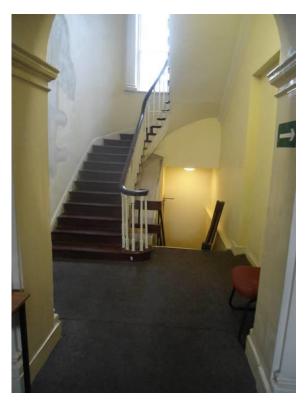
Pre-insulated multi-layer heating pipe-work between joists which were notched locally adjacent to radiators



Ceiling consolidation using metal discs to support original ceiling

1.3 Challenges

- Sensitively integrating building services within the historic fabric to ensure the domestic Georgian character was retained whilst future-proofing the building for further building services or IT upgrades as required.
- Investigation of existing services and routes to agree costs for re-routing and upgrading building and IT services.
- Agreement of vertical and horizontal service routes.
- Working in a live campus environment and maintaining exiting building services to adjoing building during construction works.
- Proving detailed cost estimates on repair strategy of the building prior to construction.
 A timber & damp proof survey and structural survey was undertaken to determine accurate condition and remedial measures required.
- Responding promptly to issues during construction to provide sound conservation advice on rotten timbers, plaster repairs and damp proofing and ensure minimal impact on the programme.
- Maintaining extremely tight and limiting budget on this sensitive conservation project.



Curved stairwell prior to refurbishment



Curved stairwell after refurbishment works completed

1.4 Health, Safety and Welfare

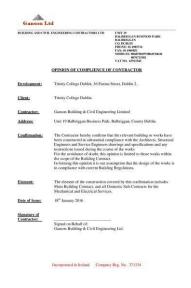
- A pragmatic approach was undertaken to ensure compliance with all Health Safety and Welfare regulations.
- Contractor was made aware from the outset of very restricted site conditions and that the building did not form part of the main university campus.
- Deliveries to and from site only provided outside of working hours.
- PSCP visited site fortnightly and recommended measures to be implemented to carefully manage risk, including safe storage of materials and disposal of waste.
- Methodology Statements issued for specialist construction works.
- Use of hot works and other relevant client permits.



Confirmation from Building Control of Completion Certificate



Sample method statement for demolition works



Contractors compliance certificate



New wainscoting to entrance hall



Original ceiling mould repaired with discrete building services



Study space to third floor with contemporary lighting and neutral decor



Contemporary LED pendant lights with original ceiling rose complement the traditional ground floor meeting room



Tuck pointint carried out to red brick walls during first phase of works.



Traditional appearance radiators help retain the domestic Georgian character of the building

1.5 Sustainability

- Approach to sustainability was driven by cost constraints & sensitive conservation philosophy.
- Specification of low energy LED light fittings with motion detectors
- Existing heating system upgraded and controlled by the BMS.
- Vertical and horizontal riser positions were located to ensure the building was futureproofed to allow for easy upgrading of building services that would not disturb the historic fabric again.
- Dual-flush toilets
- Existing windows draught-proofed to minimise air leakage

1.6 Fire safety compliance evidence

- Fire Safety Certification was granted prior to construction works commencing.
- Application identified original elements to be upgraded, location of fire rated doors, automatic opening ventilator and fire alarm systems.
- Installation of Rockwool Flexi insulation between floor joists in-line with TRADA recommendations.
- Existing doors fitted with hardwood slips, intumescent brush and coating applied.
- Services fire-stopped as they crossed between separating walls and inspections were carried out fortnightly.
- Access hatches were fire rated and smoke detectors located in voids.

The project not only meets all relevant fire safety requirements, but also retains its original Georgian character and integrity through the retention of original layout, existing doors and floors.





Existing door upgraded with hardwood slips and intumescent strips and coating



Rockwool Flexi between existing floor joists

Relevant Fire Safety Certificates



Traditional lantern light fitting – centre piece of the curved stairwell at the heart of the building



Detail of refurbished fireplace with hand-crafted wallpaper to ground floor meeting room



Refurbished window; rich-grey painted stair treads enhance architectural detailing



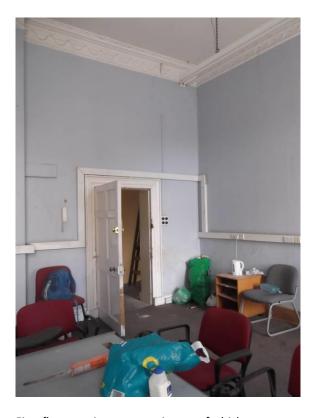
Traditional chandelier to seminar room in first floor

1.7 Client Feedback:

In a unique, imaginative collaboration between the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies (TCD), Literature Ireland and Dalkey Archive Press, The Trinity Centre for Literary Translation (est. 2012) brings together the theory, practice and business of translation. Its premises in 36 Fenian Street provides this original partnership with a dedicated space, anchoring a myriad of collaborations between the parties: students with professionals, literary translators with the world of publishing, visiting translators with Irish writers, foreign cultural agencies with their Irish counterparts, researchers with practitioners, and not least, the public with its creative practitioners. Both in the building and the concept it houses, 36 Fenian Street stands testament to Trinity's commitment to conservation and tradition on the one hand, and on the other to renewal and global outreach.

1.8 Time and Cost

- Opening up works carried out prior to the main contract commencing informed design approach.
- Project competitively tendered using two stage procurement method under GCCC contract – client retained control of quality and cost.
- During construction programme was reviewed on a fortnightly basis.
- Review of specification information and methodologies submitted and approve/ decline as required.
- Cost control was maintained and value for money achieved as claims for additional costs were accompanied by a breakdown of materials, labour and prelims.
- The contract was administered to allow sufficient time to review claims and seek further clarification without effect on programme.



First floor seminar room prior to refurbishment



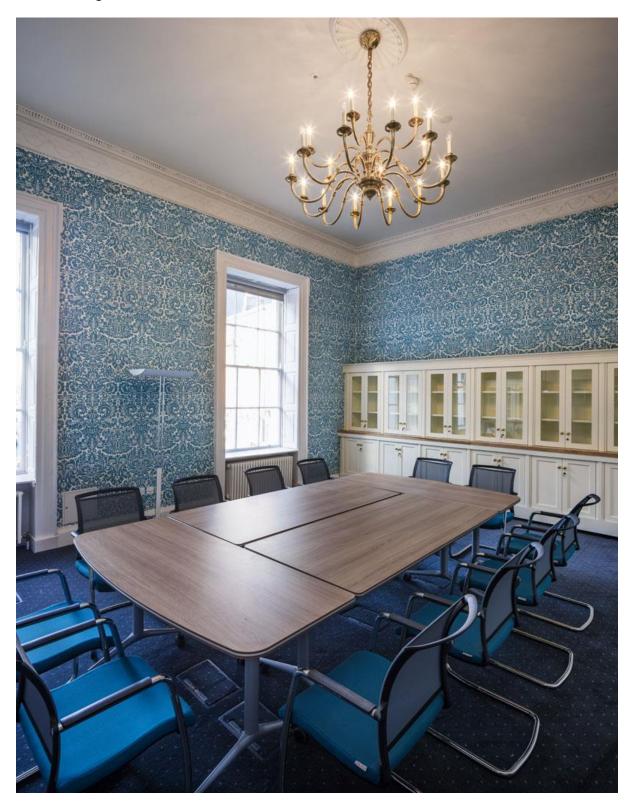
Seminar room after refurbishment. The room is a showcase for the Centre for Literary Translation (PM Photography)

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Appendix of supporting photographs



Additional Page 1:



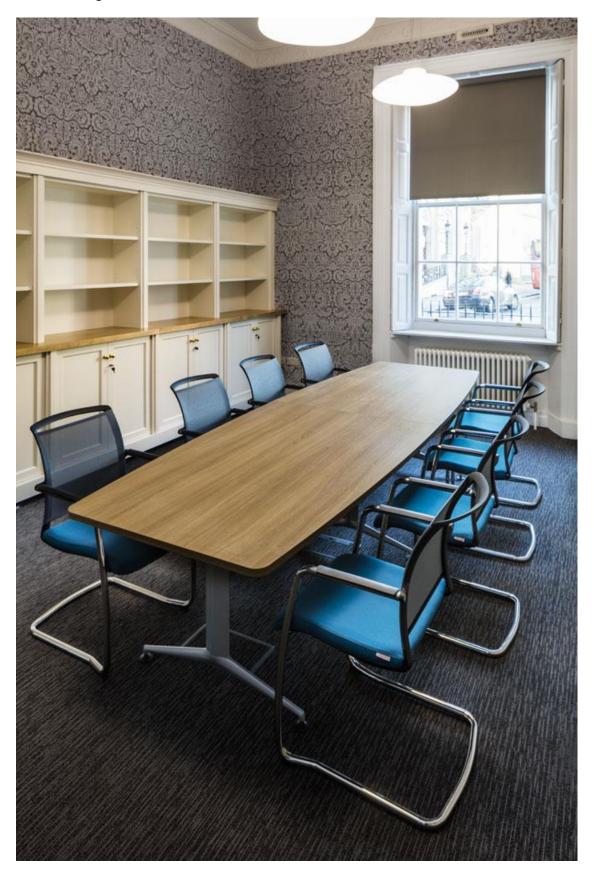
First floor seminar room (PM Photography)

Additional Page 2:



Basement study area (PM Photography)

Additional Page 3:



Ground floor meeting room (PM Photography)

Additional Page 4:



Original ornate moulded ceiling to entrance hallway



Refurbished original cast-iron boot scraper to entrance



Refurbished third floor office



Detail of wallpaper, shelving and light fitting to seminar room



