Conservation Section, Planning & Property Development Department Civic Offices, Wood Quay, Dublin 8

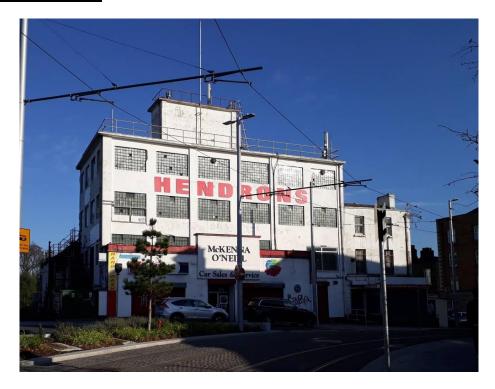
An Rannóg Caomhantais, An Roinn Pleanála & Forbairt Maoine Oifigí na Cathrach, An Ché Adhmaid, Baile Átha Cliath 8 T. 01 222 3927 F. 01 222 2830

Date: 28/08/19

To the Chairperson and Members of the Central Area Committee

Addition of 4 Hendron's, 36-40 Dominick Street Upper, Dublin 7 to the Record of Protected Structures in accordance with Section 54 and 55 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

Photograph of Structure:



Introduction:

It is proposed to initiate procedures under Section 55 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended to add 4 Meeting House Lane, Dublin 7 to Dublin City Council's Record of Protected Structures.

Name and Address of Owner: Mr Eugene Carlyle, 36 Upper Dominick Street, Dublin 7.

Request for Addition:

The request to assess the structure for proposed addition to the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) came from the following:

• Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht on the 4th of June 2014.

 Mountjoy St., Middle Mountjoy St. & Palmerston Place (MPM) Residents Association on the 12th of March 2010

- Tommy Graham, Editor, History Ireland on the 12th of March 2010
- Jack O'Kelly, Architect on the 13th of September 2018
- Maureen O'Sullivan, T.D. Independent Dublin Central on the 19th of September 2018
- Michael Haslam, local resident on the 22nd July 2019; Barry McDonnell, local resident on the 28th July 2019; Caoimhe Clarke, local resident on the 29th July 2019; Paul Farrelly, local resident on the 29th July 2019; Raymond Kenny, local resident on the 29th July 2019; Gwen O'Dowd, local resident on the 30th July 2019; Ann Gannon, local resident on the 30th July 2019; Phelim Connolly, local resident on the 30th July 2019; Eamon O'Flaherty, local resident on the 31st July 2019; Kathleen Shields, local resident on the 31st July 2019; John Carty, local resident on the 31st July 2019; Sebastian Vencken, local resident on the 31st of July 2019; and Philip Meyler on the 4th August 2019.

Summary of Applicant's Reasons for Seeking Addition:

- Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht: Hendron's, 33-36 Dominick Street Upper, Dublin 7 is listed as one of the Minister's recommendations for inclusion on the RPS of structures deemed as being of 'Regional' significance or higher identified during Stage 1 of the Dublin Survey carried out by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The NIAH assigned the Hendron's Building a Regional rating. The Minister's recommendation (as part of Stage 1) was issued to Dublin City Council on the 4th of June 2014.
- Mountjoy St., Middle Mountjoy St. & Palmerston Place (MPM) Residents Association: The Hendron building is described as extremely rare example of mid century vernacular modern industrial architecture' by DoCoMoMo, the international committee for documentation and conservation of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the modern movement, and as a 'rare survival' by Christine Casey in The Buildings of Ireland Dublin. The conservation architect, Mr Paul Arnold, employed by the applicant for the recently refused planning application on the site, noted that it is of 'technical and architectural merit'. He went on to say: 'The building is of architectural, historical, industrial and social interest, as defined in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines... such a building could merit protection in light of DCC's Policy H25: It is the policy of Dublin City Council to protect buildings and features of industrial heritage in situ and their related artefacts and plants where appropriate' and Policy H26 'It is the policy of Dublin City Council to review the RPS in relation to Dublin's twentieth century architecture to ensure that this aspect of the built heritage is suitably protected'.
- Tommy Graham, Editor, History Ireland: Concurring with conservation recommendations of various National bodies: DoCoMoMo; An Taisce; conservation architect Paul Arnold and the residents own recorded desire to protect the Hendron's factory front MPM Residents Association submission to the Board August 2009 'the Hendron Building is more representative of the scale, height and setting for a development at this most sensitive part of the site. Its retention is therefore vital to any scheme creating the required transitional zone to ensure its assimilation with the high quality local residential environment'. An Bórd Pleanála's own judgement states that the Hendron's Modernist Factory was a building of architectural character and that it was not satisfied that the development would justify its demolition. To secure the protection of the sites cultural heritage I am advocating the inclusion of Hendron's Modernist Factory in the Record of Protected Structures.
- Jack O'Kelly, Architect: The Hendron Building is a local landmark and is positioned next to the new LUAS line and the proposed entrance to the new DIT Grangegorman Campus. It is a great example of twentieth Century architectural heritage within the area.
- Maureen O'Sullivan, T.D. Independent: No reasons supplied
- Michael Haslam, Barry McDonnell, Caoimhe Clarke, Paul Farrelly, Tara Walsh, Raymond Kenny, Gwen O'Dowd, Ann Gannon, Phelim Connolly, Eamon O'Flaherty, Kathleen Shields, John Carty, Sebastian Vencken, Philip Meyler (local residents): A functional, reinforced concrete building it is part of both a wider European tradition and celebrates

Ireland's part in this New Architecture. The Hendron Building is one of the few and most iconic examples of a modernist, functionalist architecture in Dublin City Centre. Its position at the top of Constitution Hill is unprecedented for such a building. As a building it is need of restoration, renovation and new use... Dublin...needs to set a qualitative agenda of creative reuse and this is a perfect opportunity to do so. Protecting both the front and rear workshop building will help further this agenda.

Addition of Significant 20th Century Structures:

Policy CHC3 of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 provides as follows: *To identify and protect exceptional buildings of the late twentieth century; to categorise, prioritise and, where appropriate, add to the RPS. Dublin City Council will produce guidelines and offer advice for protection and appropriate refurbishment.*

In June 2014 the Minister recommended that this structure, Hendron's, 33-36 Dominick Street Upper, Dublin 7 be included on Dublin City Council's RPS. The Hendron's building has been assigned a Regional rating by the NIAH.

Following on from the above, in June 2018, the Conservation Section carried out a screening process for the 20th century Stage 2 Ministerial Recommendations (137 in total). These were then screened for National and high level Regional significance using the criteria provided in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011. Twenty eight significant structures were identified to be prioritised for addition including this structure.

Site Location & Zoning Map:

The Hendron's Building is located at the junction of Dominick Street Upper and Palmerston Place. The north and west boundary fronts onto the Western Way.



Zoning map: The subject site is zoned Z3: To provide for and improve neighbourhood facilities.

Recent Planning History:

Record Flamming Flictory.					
Planning Ref	Description	Decision			
0903/93	Erect ventilation duct to spray booth on the external face of the building at	REFUSE			
	Palmerston Place.	PERMISSION			
		06-Dec-1993			
0746/94	Retain change of use of part of light industrial building to indoor	GRANT			

Planning Ref	Description	Decision
	skateboarding club.	PERMISSION 08-Aug-1994
3938/08	(Summary Description Only) PROTECTED STRUCTURE: For development of a mixed use scheme on a site of 0.3444 hectares, approximately, principally identified as the site of the 'Hendron's' building, located to the east of the junction of Western Way and Dominick Street Upper, Dublin 7. The site is bounded to the north and west by Western Way, to the south by Dominick Street Upper and to the southeast partially by Palmerston Place and partially bt the rear gardens of nos. 1-5 Palmerston Place. The site contains a stone wall which is a protected structure (Dublin City Council RPS no. 8682), extending along the site's boundary with Western Way. The overall proposed development will consist of: the demolition of the existing building on site (3,130 sq.m) and the construction of a mixed use scheme with a total gross floor area of 11,466 sq.m. The proposed development ranges in height from single storey to 14 storeys over 1 no. basement level and comprises: 48 no. residential units (5 no. 1 bedroom apartments); 4 no. live/work units (3 no. 3 bedroom live/work units and 1 no. 4-bedroom live/work units); 32 no. apart-hotel units (2,505 sq.m); offices (1,532 sq.m), a neighbourhood shop (675 sq.m); an artists gallery/studio (511 sq.m) and restaurant (334 sq.m). The proposed development also comprises works to the existing stone boundary wall (RPS no. 86825) fronting Western Way (which will be retained and incorporated into the proposed development), including the creation of openings in the wall of various sizes to form pedestrian entrances to the development, and the removal of the existing ashlar stone piers, plinth and cast iron railings to Upper Dominick Street. The development also includes 1 no. basement level principally comprising: 68 no. car parking spaces; 60 no. bicycle parking spaces; plant rooms; private residential storage; and bin storage. The proposed development will provide pedestrian access/egress points along Western Way, Dominick Street Upper and Palmerston Place. Vehicular assess to the basement level w	REFUSE PERMISSION by An Bord Pleanála (Ref. PL 29N.233677) 14-Jan-2010 (Note: the Protected Structure refers to the stone wall on Western Way (RPS Ref 8682)

Enforcement History:

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Re. No.	Opened	Reason	Closed	Reason
E0915/00	11-Sep-2000	Antenna – Mobile transmitters on top of building & other transmitters	22-Mar-2005	Exempted development
E1123/01	27-Jun-2001	Change of use – property being used for social events and discos	30-May-2006	Exempted development

Summary Description

Internal access to the site was sought by letter to the owner on the 3rd January 2019 but no response has been received. The description below incorporates elements from O'Toole, S. 'Hendron's Garage, Dominick Street Upper, Dublin 7, 1949' in Ellen Rowley (ed.) *More Than Concrete Blocks, Volume 2, 1940 – 1973,* Dublin 2019.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The site has been broken down between the Hendron's front building, the workshops to the rear and No.36 Dominick Street Upper to the east.



Fig. 1: Site layout noting the various components of the complex with location of railings indicated by arrow

Hendron's: Front Building

Detached six-bay four-storey former showroom, built 1946-9, which conceals the long, lower engineering workshops to the rear (north). There is a tall lift tower, set towards the rear elevation of the front building and placed symmetrically, with a flagpole. The building elevation is symmetrical, well-ordered, undecorated, and clearly functional. The roof is flat, with an over-sailing eave rather than a parapet, and a steel railing parapet above. The walls are rendered, with subtle detailing in the form of pier buttresses dividing the front elevation and a raised concrete plinth. Signage to the front reads 'HENDRONS' in raised lettering; it has been indicated that this is not original. The walls are painted to the front and side elevations, but unpainted to the rear. The rear wall, including that to the tower, has an unfinished appearance, not only due to the unpainted render, but because there are starter bars and pads visible, indicating that the building was intended to be extended to the rear in due course.

The building is four bays deep, and it is likely it was intended to double this depth. Nonetheless, there is a six-bay strip of multi-pane steel windows to the rear elevation, either side of the lift tower; a door has been inserted to the western window. The windows are horizontally rectangular to the front elevation, and square to the west and east elevations. They are formed from glass bricks built into the walls, without window sills. The building is not quite symmetrical; the windows to the western bay are narrower than the others, being eleven bricks wide, while the others are twelve, or in the case of the central bays, thirteen. The first floor window to the east is a framed window rather than of glass bricks, and larger than the others. These slight variations in fenestration give it an air of informality and indicates its vernacular origins. There are square-headed door openings at ground and first floor level to the west elevation; a metal stairs gives access to the door at first floor.

There is a single-storey projection to the front elevation forming a shopfront which houses the former showroom internally. This is an off-centre three-bay flat-roofed projection with a large nameplate, with windows on either side of a central door. Pilasters terminate the shopfront with a stringcourse above, broken by the nameplate. Symmetrical in itself, its off-centre positioning to allow separate access to the garage door gives it the impression of a later, ad-hoc, development.

The perception that this is a later addition is heightened as it appears to cut off windows at first floor level. However, it is understood that this element is contemporaneous with the main building.

While access to the interior was requested but not enabled, a number of images available online, dating to c. 2017, indicate the use of a frame to support the structure with square-profile columns supporting downstand beams throughout the building. These images show concrete floors simple timber skirting in some locations. Similar to the exterior, the windows do not have sills internally and there are no architraves. Images show the columns placed places at relatively close centres within the interior.

No.36 Dominick Street Upper

Corner-sited two-bay three-storey over basement double-pile house, built c.1850, attached to Hendron's to west with former workshop building to north and concrete block shed to east. Pitched double-pile roof part hidden behind parapet with gabled ends to east and hipped to west having slate roof, clay ridge tiles, rendered chimneystacks and cast-iron rainwater goods. Painted smooth-rendered walls with rusticated render to ground floor, continuous sill course to first floor and stone coping to parapet. Square-headed window openings with painted stone sills and one-over-one timber sash windows to first floor front elevation; replacement uPVC windows elsewhere. Door opening part hidden by later shopfront has surviving decorative fanlight and replacement door. Projecting shopfront added to front elevation with concrete block and machine brick plinth; roller shutters to three sides. No access was possible to the interior, however a report prepared as part of the planning application Ref: 3938/08 recorded surviving decorative plasterwork, historic joinery including architraves and staircase and lath-and-plaster ceilings.

Workshops

The rear workshops are can be divided into three sections. The eastern section, which extends behind the adjoining No.36, is a two-storey structure with a ten-bay side elevation constructed of painted concrete and having square-headed window openings with steel windows and a flat roof. A door opening with the remains of a pulley is located at first floor level. This building contains a basement which may incorporate elements of the original basement of the return of No.36; the basement of the workshop is linked to that of No.36.

The central workshop is higher with a flat roof having high-level windows along both side elevations. The western workshop appears to have been constructed in two stages with the southern three-bay section of similar construction to the eastern workshop with painted concrete walls, square-headed window openings and large central goods entrance at ground floor level. The northern section is a two-storey gabled structure with pitched corrugated metal sheeted roof, square-headed openings with some steel windows and large goods entrances to north and west elevations; some blocked openings are visible in the west elevation.

Railings

The site to the east of the footprint of the Hendron's complex of buildings was previously occupied by Palmerston Terrace/Palmerston House, which was demolished in the mid-twentieth century. Railings which bound the site as it fronted onto Dominick Street Upper survive, though these have been altered. A painted stone plinth with saddleback coping supports the railings which are a mix of cast- and wrought-iron with spearhead finials. The railings are terminated to east and west ends with painted stone piers having pyramidal caps. A cast iron panel, more decorative than the railings is fixed above the western pier, and spans to the stone wall beside it and across part of the railings. A recessed vehicle entrance was inserted into the railings; this does not appear on historic mapping with the land directly inside the railings laid out as gardens and access to the site indicated from Palmerston Place.

NIAH and Ministerial Recommendation for Hendron's, 36-40 Dominick Street Upper, Dublin



Reg. No. 50070389 **Date** 1945 - 1960

Previous Name N/A

Townland

County Dublin City
Coordinates 315130, 235196

Categories of Special Interest TROUNDERS

TECHNICAL

Rating Regional Original Use factory

In Use As shop/retail outlet

Description: Detached six-bay four-storey former showroom and workshop, built 1946-59, having two-storey workshop with ten-bay side elevation to rear (east), and three-bay single-storey entrance block to front (west) elevation. Later in use as artists' studios, now in retail and workshop use. Flat roof, projecting lift shaft, projecting concrete eaves, steel parapet railing. Rendered concrete walls, piers dividing pairs of bays to front, 'HENDRONS' in raised lettering to front. Rendered corner piers, plinth course and parapet to single-storey block to front, raised fascia to centre. Square-headed window openings, glass block windows to front, north, and south elevations of front block, one replacement uPVC window. Steel-framed windows to north and south elevation of workshop. Steel-framed display windows to entrance block, flanking square-headed door opening with replacement uPVC double-leaf doors. Circular window to south elevation of entrance block. Square-headed door openings to front, render surrounds, replacement uPVC doors.

Appraisal: Hendrons were an important supplier of machinery, pumps, and plant equipment in the first half of the twentieth century, importing from many European countries and the United States for projects such as the new sugar and alcohol factories, and rural electrification and water schemes in rural areas. This building was designed by Vaclav Gunzl, a Czechoslovakian engineer who managed Hendrons' machinery workshop. Gunzl had come to Ireland for Skoda, who were providing the turbines for the alcohol factories, and Hendrons was the sole agent for Skoda. Gunzl was one of many European engineers whose experience was sought for the industrialization of the new State. The building was built by Hendrons' own employees, one floor at a time. Bearing clear influences of International Modernism in its flat roof, white rendered walls, and modern materials, it nonetheless has elements of the vernacular in its slightly asymmetrical window openings, its off-centre shopfront, simple form, and its design and construction by Hendrons' staff who were not construction professionals. Today, it is a distinctive and well-known landmark in the area, a rare example of twentieth-century vernacular modernism, and a visual reminder of the importance of Hendrons as an agent of change and industrialization in the early days of the State.

Assessment of Special Interest under the Planning and Development Act 2000:

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage assigned this building ARCHITECTURAL, HISTORICAL, SOCIAL and TECHNICAL interest. Following an external inspection of the site on 18th November 2018, the Conservation Section has considered the opinion of the NIAH and Ministerial Recommendation for addition received on 9th June 2014 and is in agreement with the four categories of special interest assigned to the building (internal access was requested in writing from the owner, but no response was received).

The structure in question is considered to be of special interest under the following headings:

- ARCHITECTURAL:
 - It is the opinion of the Conservation Section that the main block of Hendrons is an exemplar of mid-twentieth architecture and is very much of its time; though it is noted that this was not the opinion of the Assistant Conservation Officer at the time of the

2008 planning application, who considered the combination of structures not to be an exceptional exemplar of the style. That opinion has been reviewed as part of this assessment and it is considered that the building's design would be described as 'vernacular modern architecture'. It exhibits clear influences of International Modernism in its concrete-framed construction, flat roof, white rendered walls and lack of ornamentation. The large windows to the four elevations of the main building also speak to a modernist influence on the building, including current thinking of the time with regard to the provision of natural light to industrial buildings. The design of the building is considered to have been directly influenced by J.D. Postma's alcohol factories of the 1930s, which are believed to be the earliest industrial buildings in the International Modern style in Ireland. Václav Gunzl, the designer of Hendrons, worked on the alcohol factory at Labadish, Co. Donegal and would have been familiar with Postma's design, employing elements of it in his own work. Further indications of the modernist influence on the design of Hendrons lie in how its form appears to be influenced by function rather than decorative or fashionable concerns. There is also an air of informality in its design which has led to the term 'vernacular' being ascribed to its design. The slightly asymmetrical window openings, off-centre shopfront and simple form are also elements of the building's vernacular modernism, of which it is a rare survivor in Dublin.

- The Hendron's Building makes a positive contribution to its setting. It is located on a prominent, elevated site at Broadstone at the junction of Upper Dominick Street and Western Way, close to the top of Constitution Hill. The distinctive form of the building with its tall lift structure over the rectangular main building and distinguishing signage lettering contributes to its prominent presence within the landscape. In addition, the depth of the front block matches the adjoining early nineteenth-century house to its east.
- The east elevation of the rear workshops displays a regularity in the arrangement of fenestration which compliments the well-proportioned facades of the surrounding terraced houses. Similar to the main block, these large windows speak to twentieth century practice in the design of industrial buildings and the necessity to provide natural light. In addition the building height of the workshop respects that of the domestic streetscape and makes a positive contribution to the visual appeal of Palmerston Place.
- No.36 Dominick Street Upper displays a symmetrical façade, which is characteristic of the streetscape of the area, including the houses on the opposite side of the street. Furthermore the building follows the historic building line of Dominick Street Upper, which can be seen further east along the street. Though alterations have been carried out to the building, it continues to retain its historic plan-form and scale with noteworthy historic fabric including sash windows, the render treatment of the front façade and the historic fanlight. In addition, a report carried out by Paul Arnold Architects as part of a previous planning application records historic fabric internally including decorative plasterwork which further adds significance to the building.

HISTORICAL:

The Hendron's Building is a visual, physical reminder of the industrial development of the early days of the state, and the important role that Hendron's played. Hendron's were major suppliers of tools, engines and machines used in various government initiatives including turbines for new electricity schemes as progress was made in extending electricity supply around the country. The industrial development of Ireland in the first half of the twentieth century was dependent on outside expertise with a number of examples of foreign experts being brought in to pass on knowledge in relation to various developments including the sugar beet factories, electricity stations and alcohol factories.

- The surviving railings and piers to the west of the building are a memento of the former Palmerston Terrace/Palmerston House, which appears on the 1847 Ordnance Survey Map, but demolished in the mid-twentieth century. Though compromised by later alterations, the railings are a noteworthy element of the historic streetscape of Upper Dominick Street and Western Way.

SOCIAL:

- Hendron's was designed by an engineer Václav Gunzl, who managed the company's machinery workshop and was constructed by Hendron's employees rather than construction workers. The direct involvement of its staff in providing this new premises, from which the company operated and contributed to the country's industrial development, adds social interest to the building. Hendron's supplied machinery for many developments in public utilities in Ireland in the mid-twentieth century which had a profound effect on rural Ireland in particular. These included rural electrification and group water schemes.

TECHNICAL:

- The use of reinforced concrete was by no means unique in Ireland in the first half of the twentieth century. However the frank expression of it as seen in the Hendron's is unusual which adds technical significance to the building. The large size of the window openings to all four elevations of the front section demonstrate how the walls are not load bearing in the traditional way. The use of glass bricks to the elevations made the large windows possible as these are more robust than plate glass. While the use of glass bricks in utilitarian buildings appeared elsewhere in Dublin including the Dublin Gasworks and Vertical Retort Houses, they are a rare survival in the city further highlighting the significance of the building within Dublin's architectural and industrial heritage.
- The building appears to have been designed and constructed in such a way as to allow for easy expansion of the structure. The unfinished appearance of the rear elevation also indicates that the building was intended to be extended to the rear in due course due to the visibility of starter bars and pads. The future-proofing of the building in this way adds further interest to it.

Significance/NIAH Rating:

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) has been carried out for this area. The NIAH uses eight categories of special interest (architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical & social) and identifies five categories of rating in seeking to rank buildings. The NIAH rating values are International, National, Regional, Local and Record Only (I, N, R, L, O). Structures which are considered of International, National, and Regional significance are deemed worthy of inclusion on the RPS.

The NIAH has assigned Hendron's a Regional rating. The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage in its 2017 handbook clarifies the meaning of this designation as follows: Structures or sites that make a significant contribution to the architectural heritage within their region or area. They also stand in comparison with similar structures or sites in other regions or areas within Ireland. Examples would include many Georgian terraces; Nenagh Courthouse, Co. Tipperary; or the Bailey Lighthouse, Howth. Increasingly, structures that need to be protected include structures or sites that make a significant contribution to the architectural heritage within their own locality. Examples of these would include modest terraces and timber shopfronts. As a result it is included in the list of Ministerial Recommendations for inclusion on the RPS, received by Dublin City Council on 9th June 2014, of structures deemed as being of 'Regional' significance or higher identified during Stage 1 of the Dublin Survey.

Conclusion:

The Conservation Section has considered the NIAH rating, the Ministerial recommendation and the applicants' reasons for seeking addition and concluded that the structures comprising Hendron's main building at 33-36 Dominick Street Upper, including No.36, the eastern workshop and railings merit inclusion on the City Council's Record of Protected Structures.

The purpose of this report is to attain the approval of the Central Area Committee of Dublin City Council for the initiation of the statutory process for the proposed addition of this structure to the Record of Protected Structures. This includes undertaking a statutory public consultation process in accordance with Section 55 of the Act. Following the statutory consultation process, a further report will be prepared taking any submissions and observations received into consideration, with a recommendation to the City Council to proceed or not with the proposed addition, or with a recommendation including amendments to the proposed addition.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the statutory process be initiated for the proposed addition of the building known as Hendron's, 36-40 Dominick Street Upper, Dublin 7, to the Record of Protected Structures, in accordance with Section 54 and 55 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). It is proposed that the structure for protection under the Act comprise the main building of the Hendron's premises, No.36 to the east, the eastern workshop facing on to Palmerston Place and the railings to the west.

Recommendation			
Address	Description (to appear on RPS)		
36-40 Dominick Street Upper, Dublin 7	Hendron's comprising the main building including No.36, the eastern workshop and		
	railings to the west		

Paraic Fallon Senior Planner	Date	

Extent of Proposed Protected Structure Status & Curtilage The proposed protected structure is outlined below in red.





Photographic Record:





Fig. 2: Main Building from southwest

Fig. 3: Main Building from southeast





Fig. 4: Main Building, west elevation

Fig. 5: East elevation (No.36)





Fig. 6: Shopfront to Main Building from southeast

Fig. 7: Eastern workshops from northeast