

### 3 Booking Hall

#### 3.1 Historical Information

The Booking Hall is located in the west side of the Central Block which is the tallest and most visually prominent element of the Western Range. The Central Block and the Booking Hall was the original main point of entry to the station for departing passengers. The double height space of the Booking Hall was the most important room in the station and opened up to the Western Yard by the three original openings and two windows at ground floor and 5 Venetian windows at first floor. Still intact inside the Booking Hall is the first floor connecting walkway cantilevered on large cast iron brackets. The walkway connected the North and South Wings and gives access to offices on the east side, one of which may have been an original strong room. On ground and first floor, east of the Booking Hall, were clerks' offices and WCs.

#### 3.2 History and Phasing

Our historical understanding of the Booking Hall relies on limited historical photographs (as seen below), as well as three architectural drawings signed by Lewis Cubitt, the architect of Kings Cross Station, in 1854. Further information about the Booking Hall comes from analysis of the existing building fabric for signs of alterations or repairs.

No photographs have been found of the Booking Hall prior to the bomb damage in 1941 but there are still drawings that show its original appearance. Except for the plant which was installed in 1977 and some additional lightweight partition walls in 1990 the plan of the Booking Hall has remained largely unaltered. Photographs from 1950 show that the reconstruction after the war was largely intact with the original scheme and shows a coffered and deeply coved ceiling, with deep projecting shelf cornice running through the heads of the Venetian windows. Also visible in these photographs taken before the bomb in 1973, are timber wall panelling and the counter fittings. However, the coffered ceiling and shelf cornice are now also lost due to the bomb in 1973.

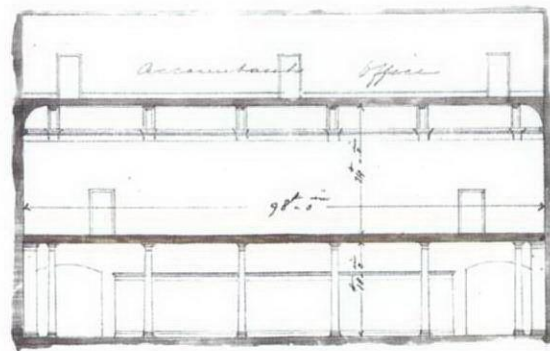
#### 3.3 Significance

The Booking Hall is of great importance and plays a essential role for the enhancement of the historic station as a whole. The impressive size and scale of the Booking Hall, as well as its central location in the Western Range, make it a key area for Kings Cross Station as a whole.

The staircase leading from the first floor balcony, inside of the Booking Hall, to the second floor is one of four primary staircases in the Western Range. The stair in the Booking Hall is the only one of the four that is believed to be original and intact which makes it a historical and architectural feature of high heritage significance (see section 1.8 of this report for significance plans).



Booking Hall after the Bomb, 1941



Arch. 1/1854 by Cubitt

Lewis Cubitt  
Jan 8. 1854

Booking Hall Section by Lewis Cubitt



Booking Hall Western Entrance



Cast-Iron brackets for first floor balcony



Automated ticketing 1970's Booking Hall



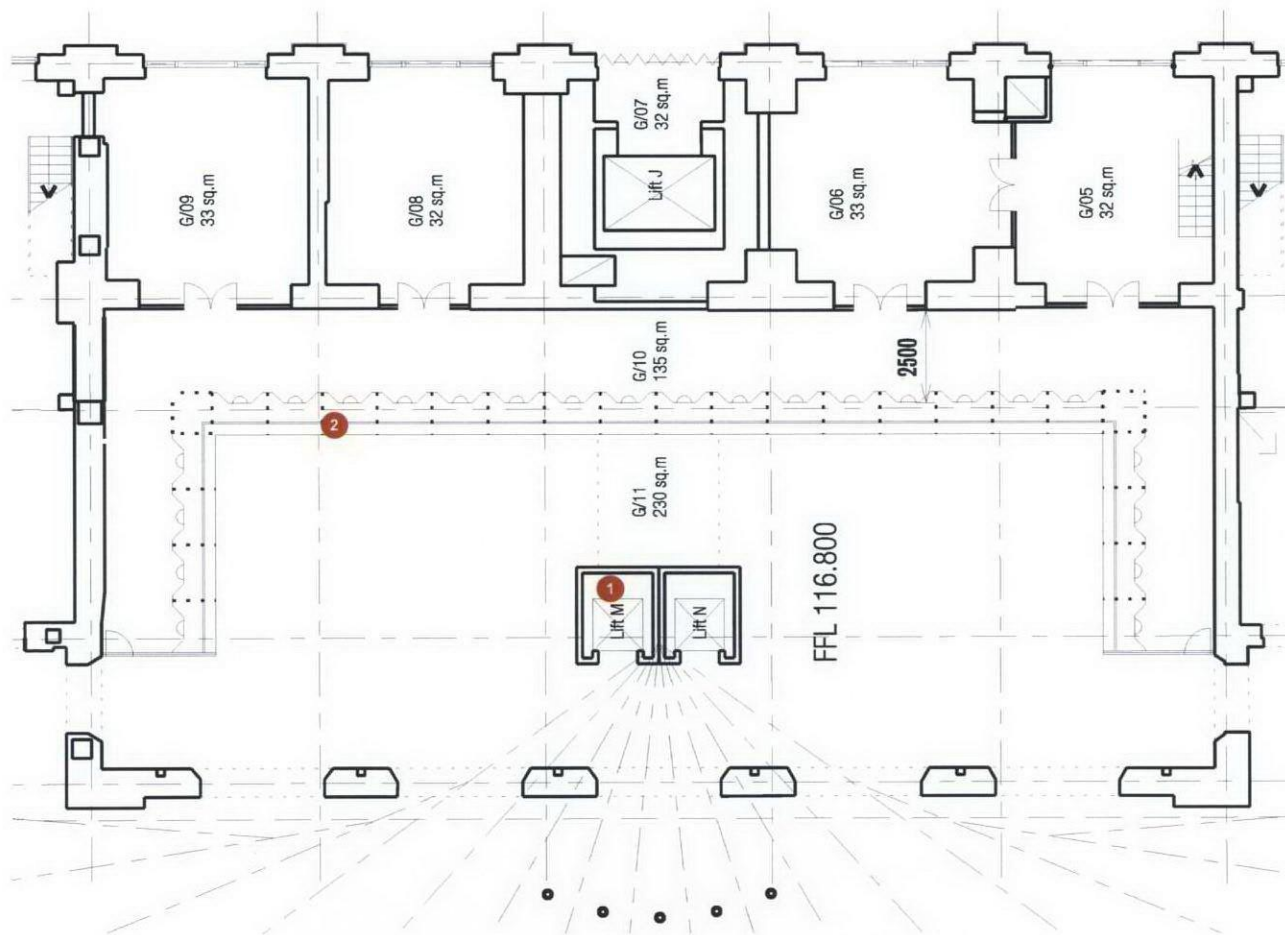
View from Booking Hall into MTS

## 4 Design Approach - Booking Hall

### 4.1 Variations to Consented Scheme

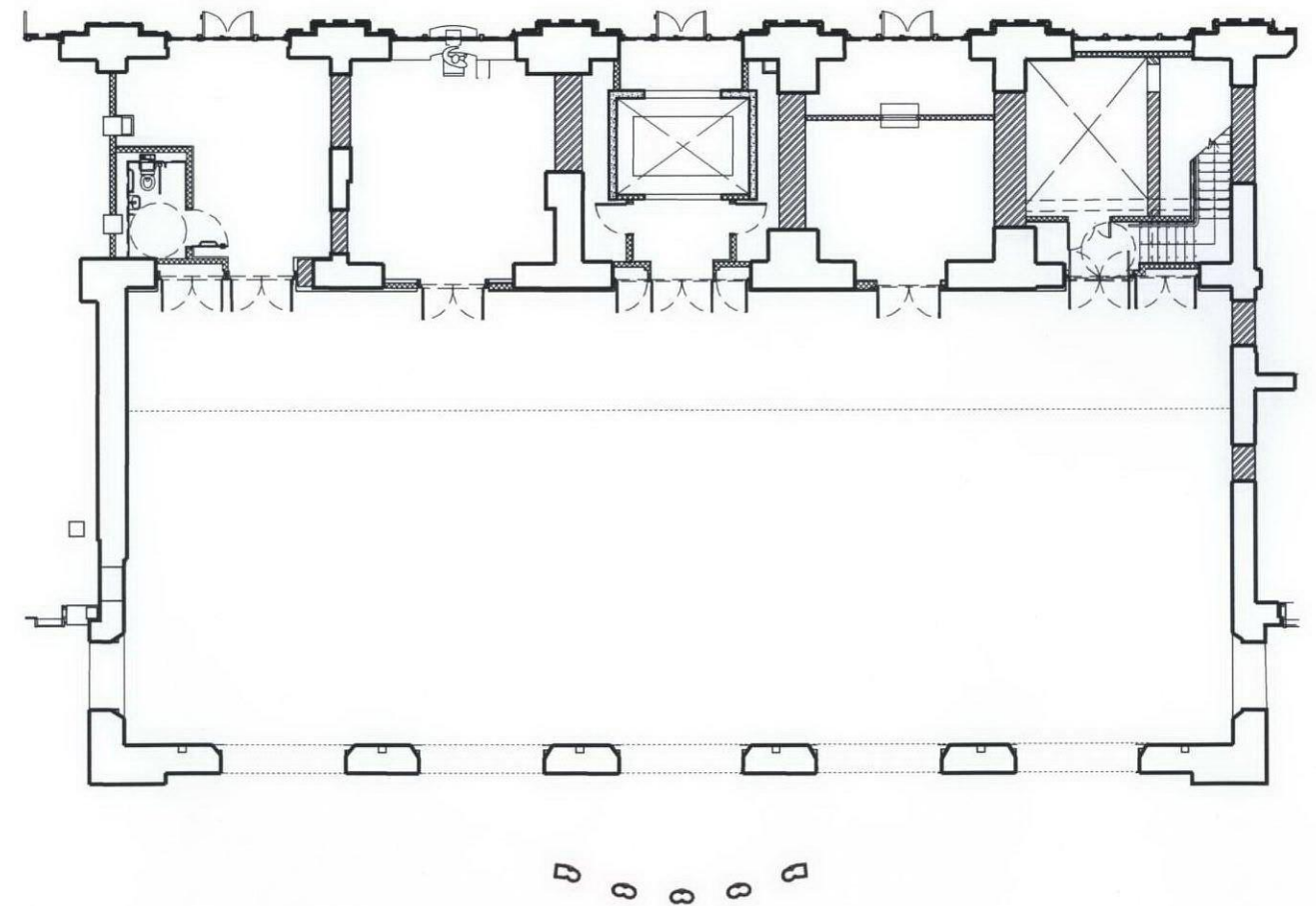
The drawings below show the layout that has been consented within the Planning Application in December 2006.

Annotated in red are changes to the current scheme. These variations reflect design development with NR and EH/LBC and generally enhance the existing fabric.

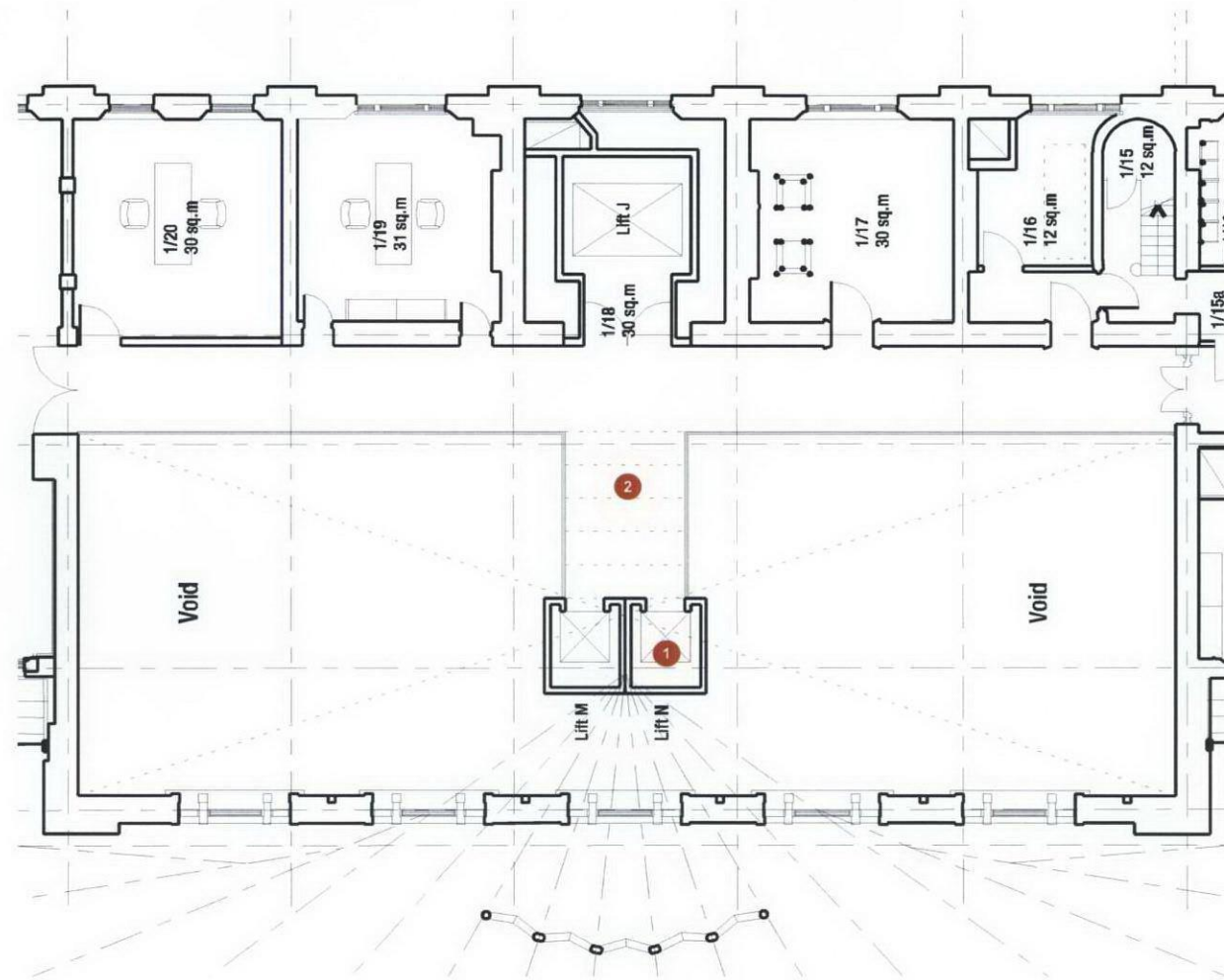


Ground Floor Plan - Consented Design, December 2006  
 1:200 @ A3

- 1 Lifts relocated elsewhere to maintain clear volume
- 2 Ticketing fixtures to perimeter removed

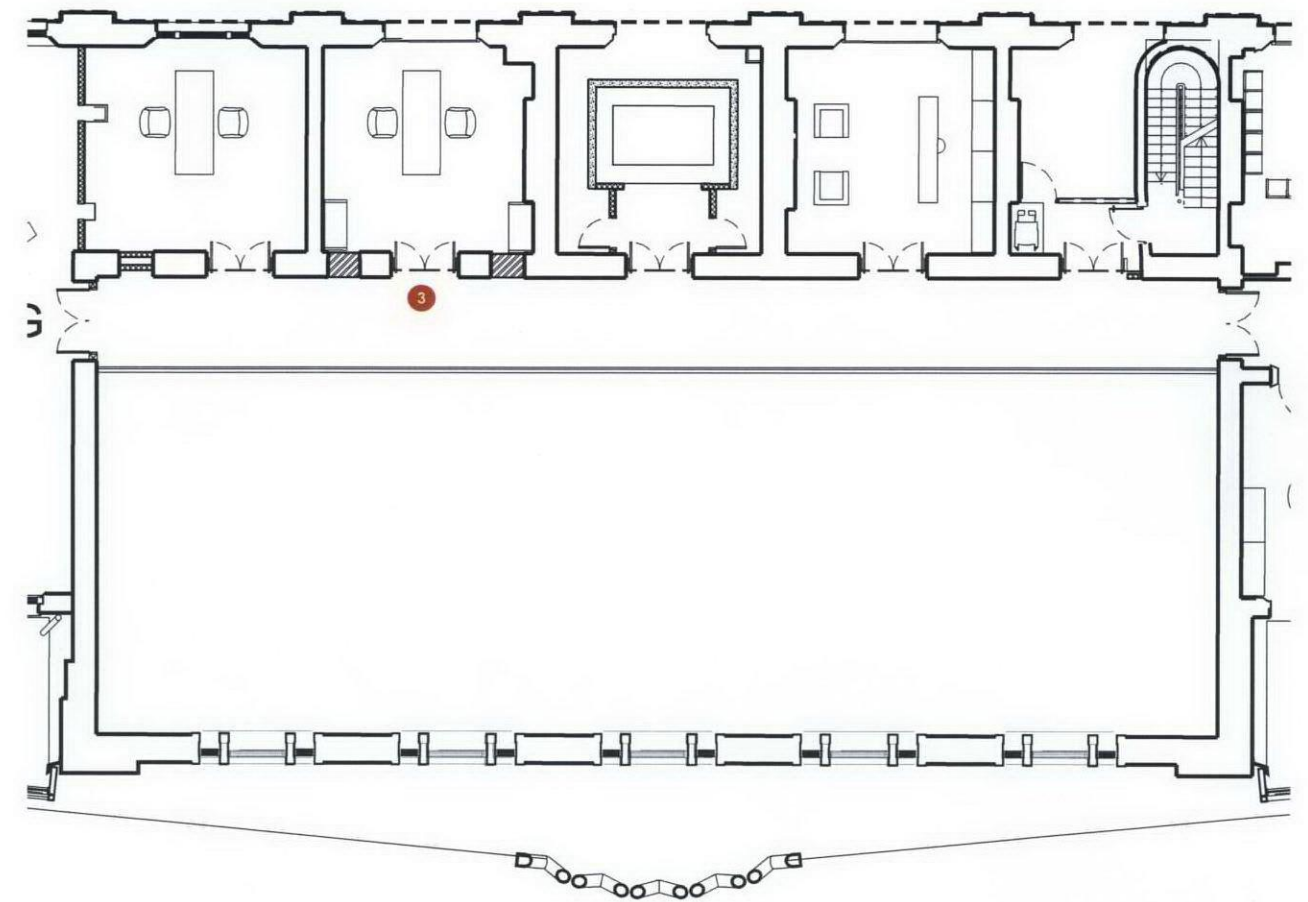


Ground Floor Plan - Proposed Scheme, April 2010  
 1:200 @ A3

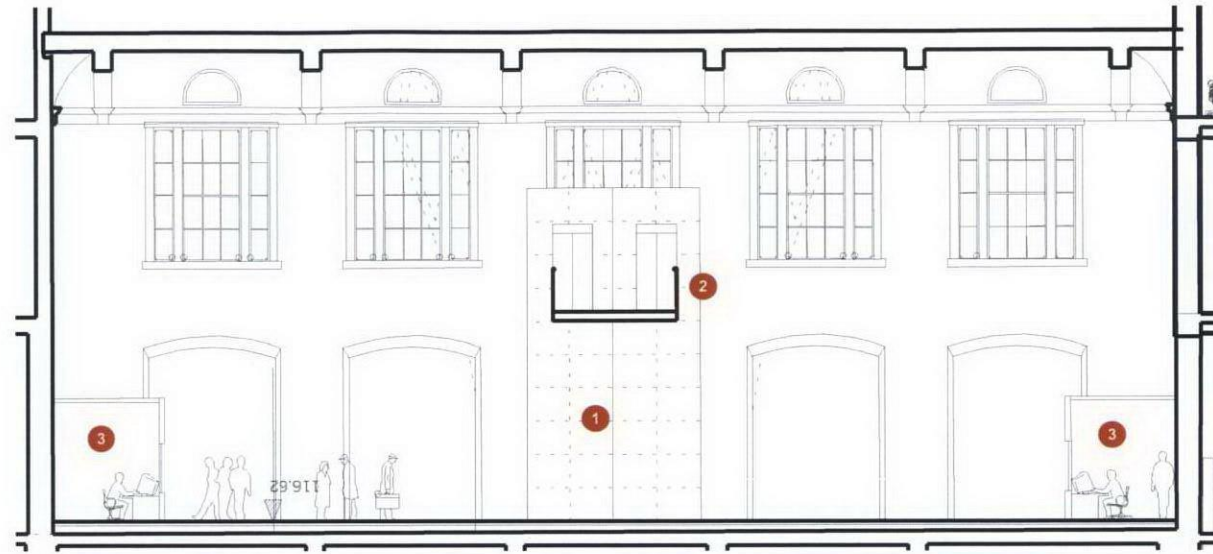


First Floor Plan - Consented Design, December 2006  
 1:200 @ A3

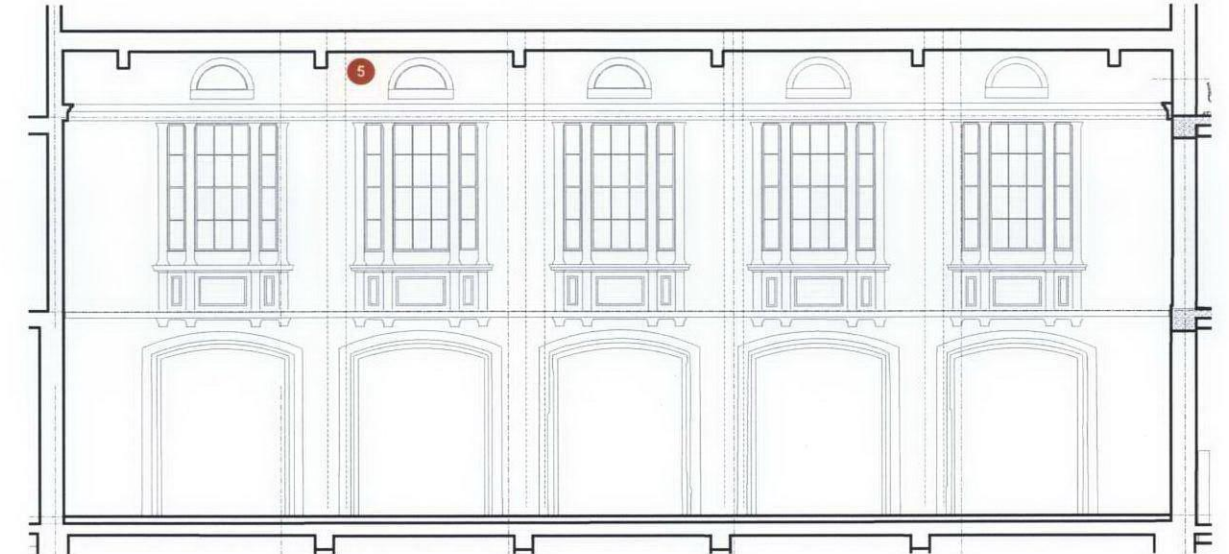
- 1 Central lifts relocated elsewhere
- 2 Link bridge from existing balcony. At mezzanine level not removed
- 3 Restore first floor door casings - new openings to create balanced composition



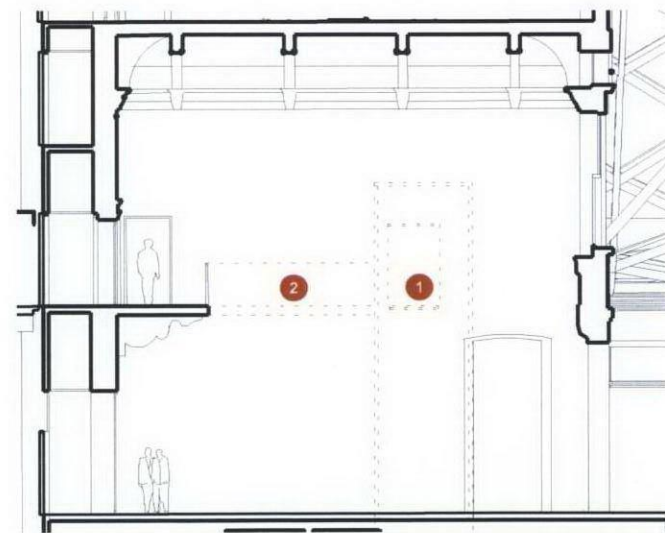
First Floor Plan - Proposed Scheme  
 1:200 @ A3



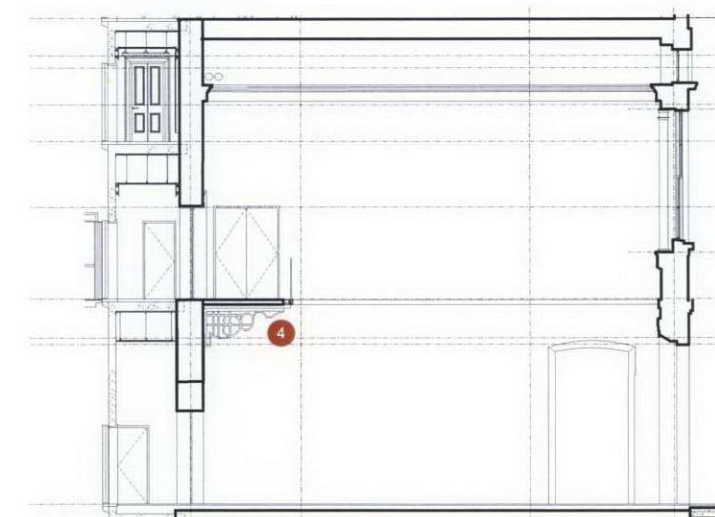
Section Looking West - Consented Scheme, December 2006



Section Looking West - Proposed Scheme



Section Looking South - Consented Scheme, December 2006



Section Looking South - Proposed Scheme

- 1 Central lift removed
- 2 Link bridge to lift removed at mezzanine level
- 3 Ticketing facilities and fixtures to perimeter removed
- 4 Paired cast iron brackets retained
- 5 New suspended ceiling to be set within existing downstand beams

#### 4.2 Brief

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The booking Hall will be returned to its intended use as a ticket hall and its exterior as well as its interior will to large part be restored and complemented by new matching designs where necessary. First floor rooms leading from mezzanine balcony have changed from cash rooms to offices.

#### 4.3 Design statement

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In regards of the Booking Hall this report sets out, illustrates and justifies the process that has led to the described development proposals of the named area.



Visualisation for illustration purposes only.

#### 4.4 Description of Proposals

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- The Booking Hall is to be reinstated as a single volume and its historic features and finishes repaired and refurbished.
- At ground floor level the arched openings from the Western Concourse are to be refurbished. The 3 arches of the Eastern elevation of the Booking Hall will be reinstated and complemented by new doors and restored door casings.
- At first floor mezzanine level, the large cast-iron brackets holding the first floor mezzanine link, as well as the six large york stone slabs will remain in situ and be complemented by a very unintrusive glazed balustrade fitted with t-shaped brackets fitted between the original york stone slabs. The doors on the mezzanine balcony will be replaced by new double doors that will be framed by decorated casings restoring the original internal facade.
- The drop down beams from the ceiling will also remain and be restored and will be complemented by a new suspended ceiling in place of the original coffered ceiling once in its place. As the original floor is lost a new granite floor is proposed, the same one as covers the rest of the new Concourse floor, the former Western Yard.

#### 4.5 Approach to Repair and Refurbishment of existing heritage features

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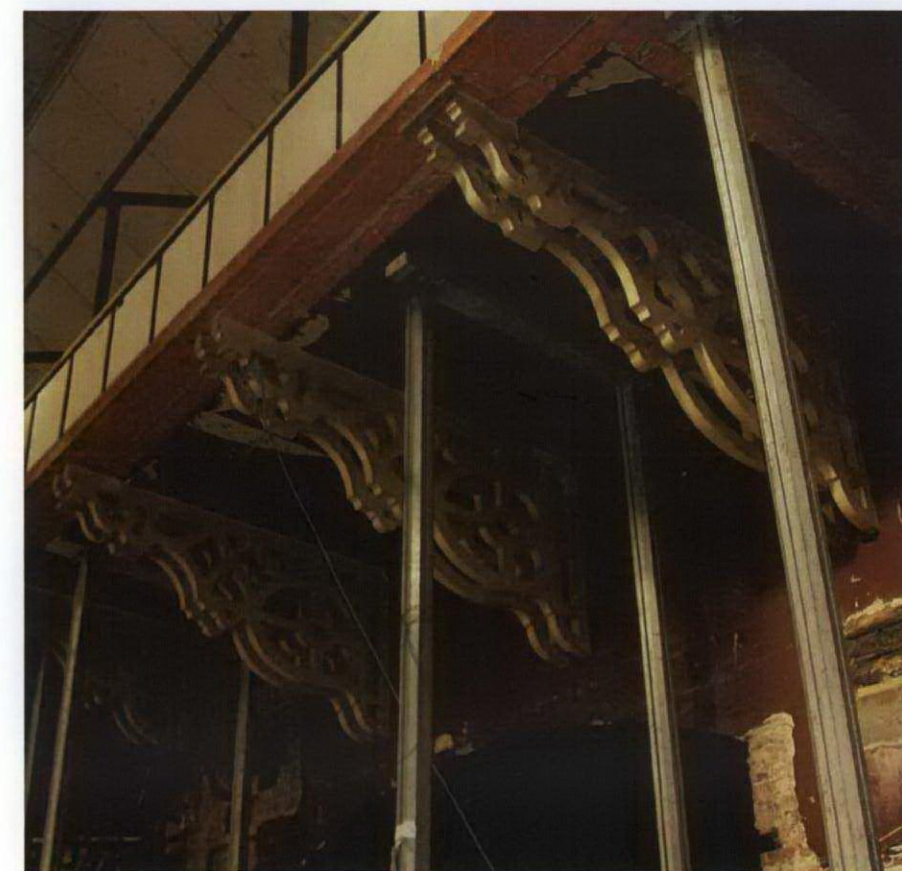
Our intention is to retain, reinstate or restore as much of the existing architectural heritage features as we reasonably can. The Booking Hall, once the finest area of the station, has several key features that once restored will contribute tremendously to the impressive visual impact and beauty of the station.

Concerning the existing heritage features in the Booking Hall we aim to:

- Expose the existing paired cast iron brackets.
- Retain the 6 surviving York stone slabs at mezzanine level.
- Reinstate the 3 arches on the eastern internal elevation as per original scheme.
- Restore first floor the door casings and create new door openings
- Repair the down stand beams from the ceiling
- Retain existing roll mouldings and repair and refurbish decorative cornice at high level.



First floor mezzanine link and cast iron brackets.



Ceiling down stand beams, cast iron brackets & arches at ground floor.

## 5 Office Entrances - Background Information

### 5.1 Historical Information

The North and South Wings together with the Booking Hall originally housed the stations most important offices and passenger facilities. However, the Southern Wing has a history of extensive alterations. The ground floor of the Southern Wing, as well as the basement, has been changed dramatically from new passenger related facilities in 1976 and 1990. The modifications included the removal of many load bearing cross walls as well as the insertion of a steel frame and a concrete floor slab. Also the original timber doors and windows were removed to create a more generous frontage for the retail and catering units.

The stair in the South Wing is not thought to be original since the earliest plans of the building show a staircase on the east side in a symmetrical location to the existing stair in the North Wing. Also, the disposition of window openings on the west elevation suggests a similar former entrance in a symmetrical location to the one in the north. The new stone stair is Victorian but was modified in the 1970's with a new concrete section between ground and first floor, realigned to an opening on the west elevation that is not thought to be original.

The stair in the North Wing, where the Northern Office entrance is located, is now the grandest in the Western Range. The stair is of traditional stone 'cantilever' construction (also known as 'pen checked'), of individual large stone steps built out of sidewalls. The stair has stone landings, ornamental cast-iron balustrade and moulded timber handrail. There are no other balustrades of this pattern in the Western Range and this may indicate that, at the very least, modifications, to the handrail only, were made to the existing stair in the North Wing, either to give better access to the footbridge or, more likely, to facilitate installation of the first lift in the station sometime in the 1890's.

The Northern Office entrance also has a decorative portico screen to the West which remain largely

intact. Further, the joinery, mouldings and finishes of the Northern Office entrance are generally in good condition, However the skirting on the southern wall is a later addition and not like the skirting on the northern wall which is part of the 1880's scheme.

### 5.2 History and Phasing

The historical information regarding the Office Entrances relies on the remaining architectural drawings signed by Lewis Cubitt, the architect of Kings Cross Station. Further information about the Office entrances comes from analysis of the existing building fabric for signs of alterations or repairs.

### 5.3 Significance

The lack of original features and the poor state of the current back-of-house kitchens and stores, the southern Office Entrance is an area of low heritage significance.

The northern office entrance is an area of same significance as the decorative finishes, mouldings and cornishes etc. remain largely intact.

Of high significance is the Northern Wing stair which is a key historical and architectural feature. (see section 1.8 of this report for significance plans).



Western Yard seen from Cheney Road

**5.4 Existing Context and Fabric**

The Southern Office Entrance, located in the Southern Wing, has lost much of its remaining historic features including the stair that runs from the ground level to the first. The stair is intact on the floors above.

The Northern Office Entrance houses the grand Northern Wing stair. In addition there are a good amount of decorative finishes such as joinery, mouldings and finishes that remain intact. On the exterior, the fine timber Portico screen to the west facade has also remained intact.

**5.5 Conservation Management Plan Policy**

Conservation Management Plan Policy 39.1 states:

'Original lath and plaster ceilings, cornices and decorative finishes should be protected and maintained in good condition. Repairs should be carried out on a like-for-like basis. Finishes should be protected against damage during any major programme of work.'

Conservation Management Plan Policy 40.1 states:

'Original timber floors, floor boarding and York stone corridor floors should be repaired and maintained wherever possible.'

Conservation Management Plan Policy 39.3 states:

'New internal partition walls, suspended ceilings and overhead ductwork should respect the principle of reversibility and minimum damage, particularly to cornices.'



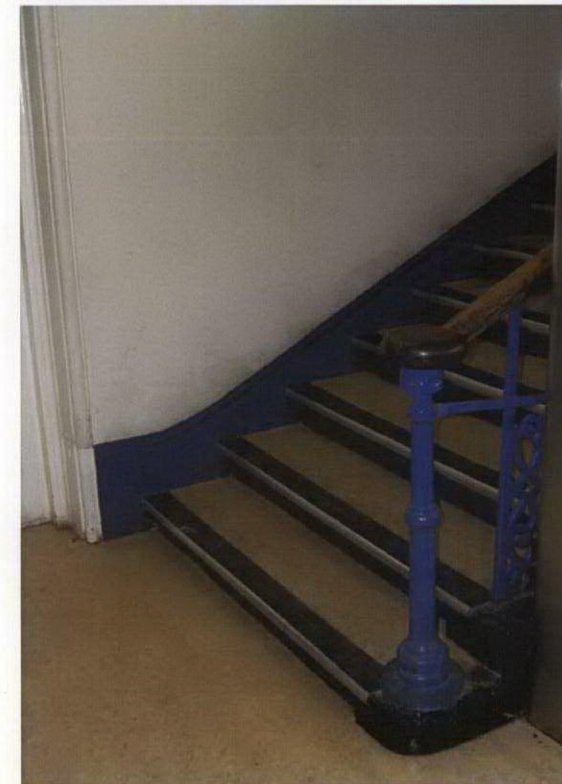
Northern Office Entrance, Existing timber skirting.



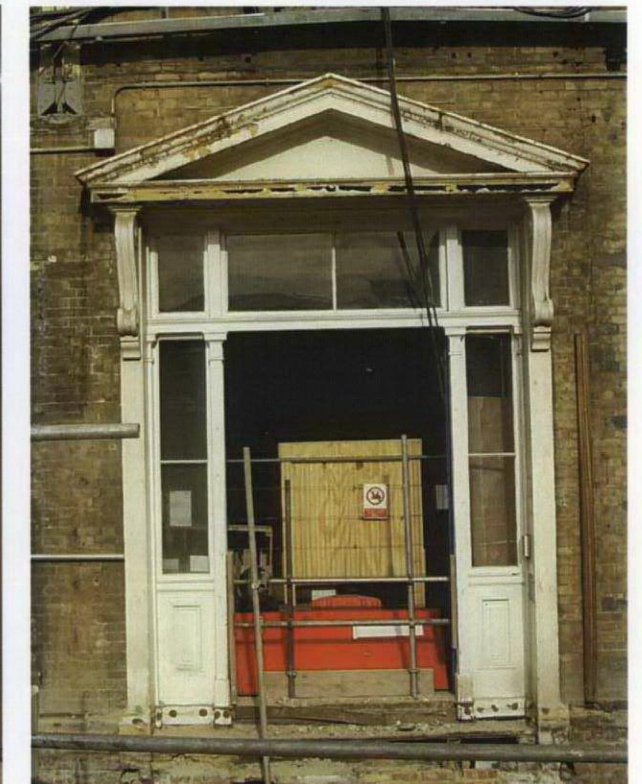
Northern Office Entrance, Stair 6, cast iron banister



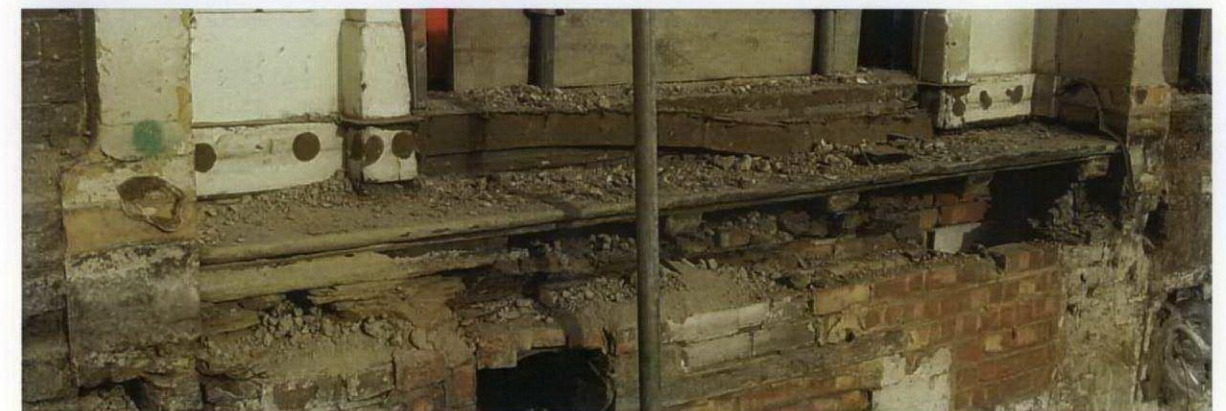
Northern Office Entrance, decorative finishes



Grand Northern Wing Stair.

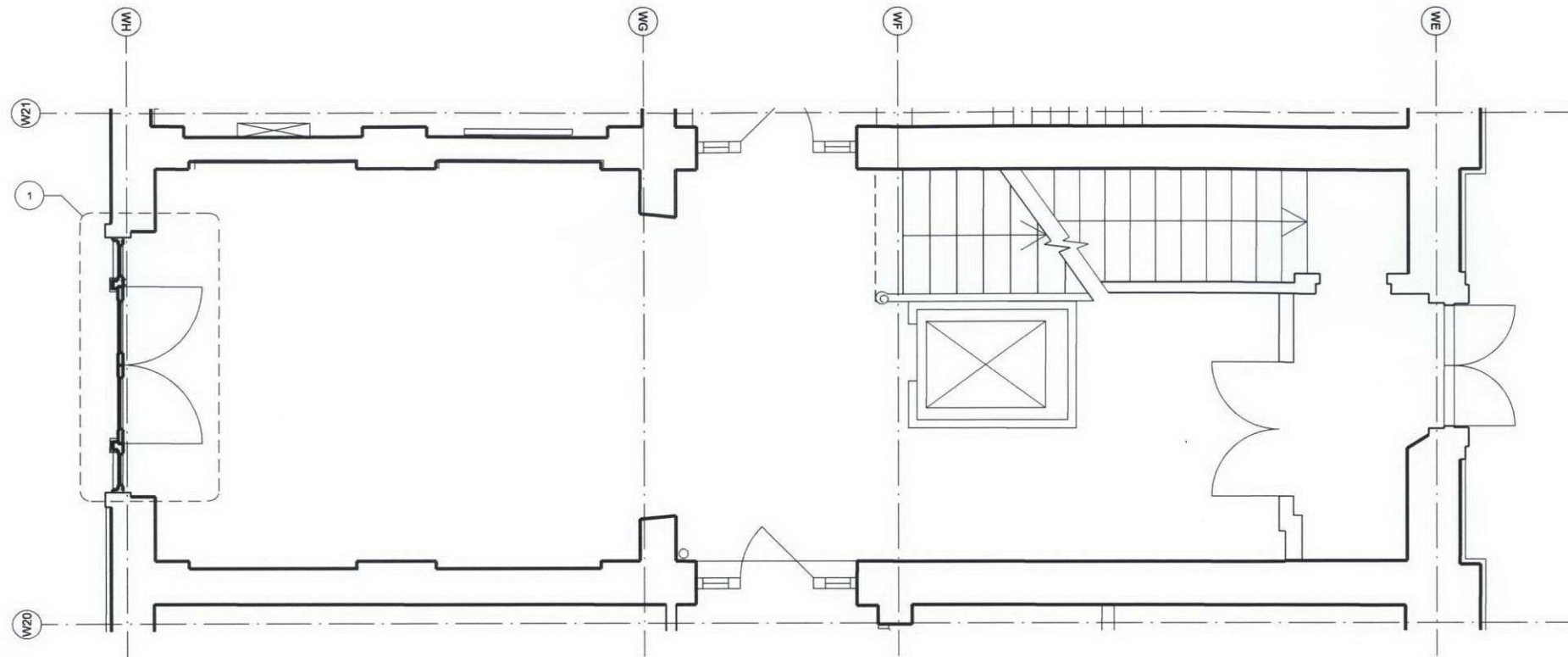


Portico Screen, G21/D1a



Northern Office Entrance, existing York Stone threshold.





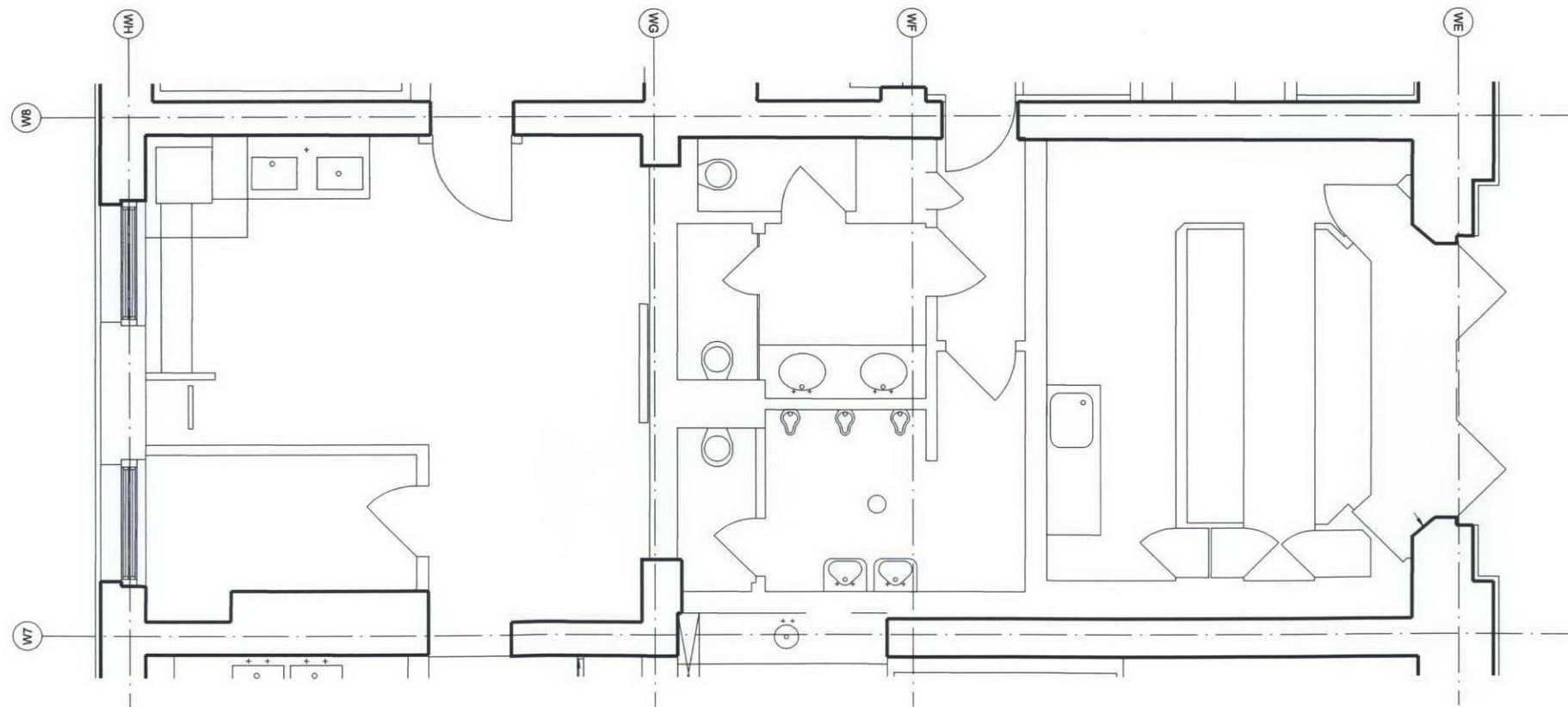
Existing Ground Floor Plan - Northern Office Entrance 1:50@A3



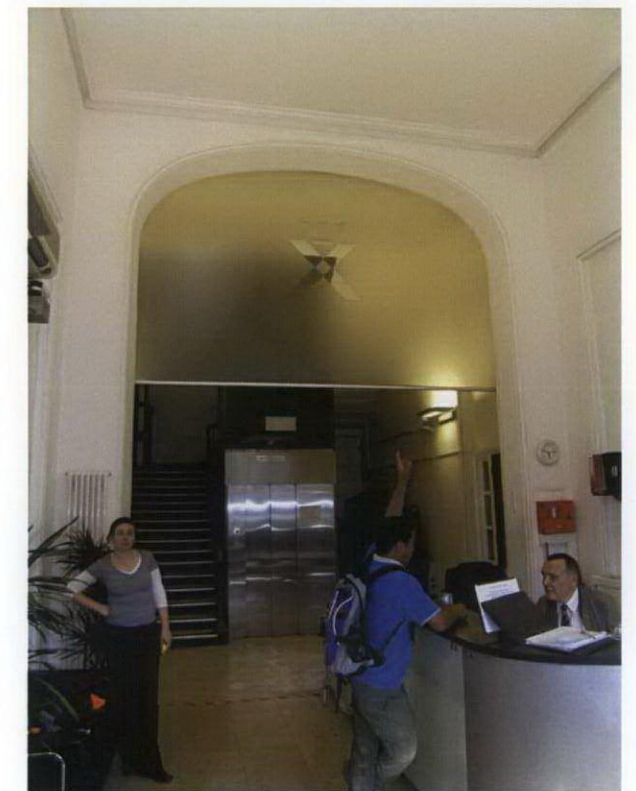
Portico Screen, G21/D1a



Decorative ceiling, Stair 6 lobby.



Existing Ground Floor Plan - Southern Office Entrance 1:50@A3



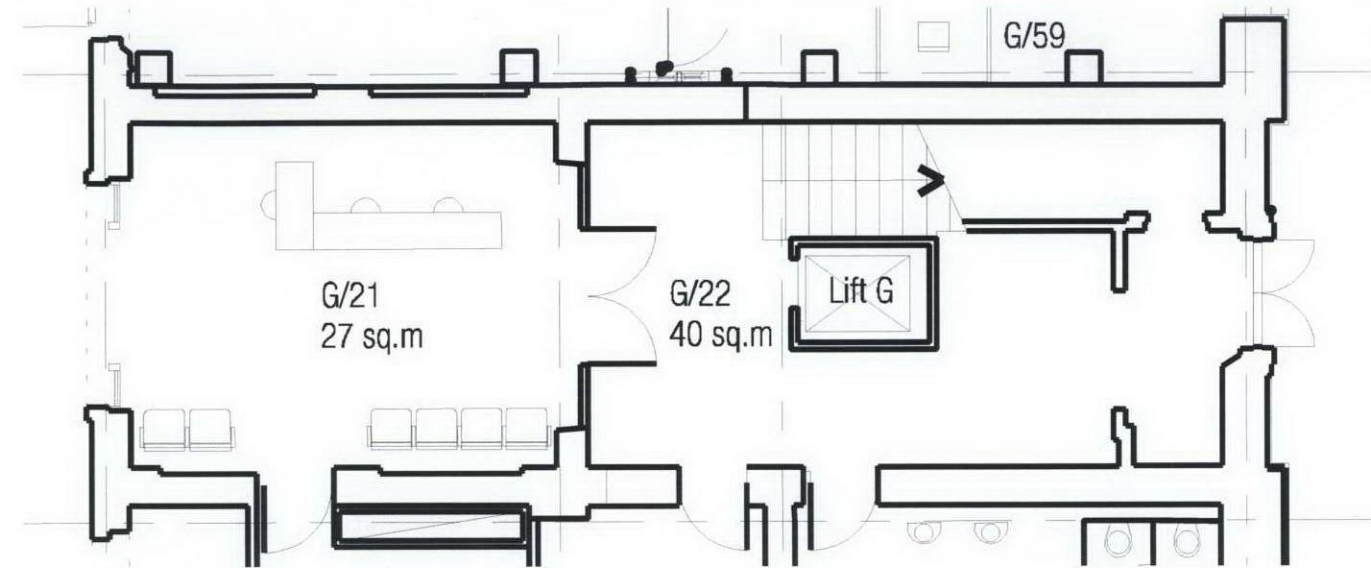
Northern Office Entrance, NR reception lobby.

## 6 Office Entrances - Revised Proposals

### 6.1 Variations to Consented Scheme

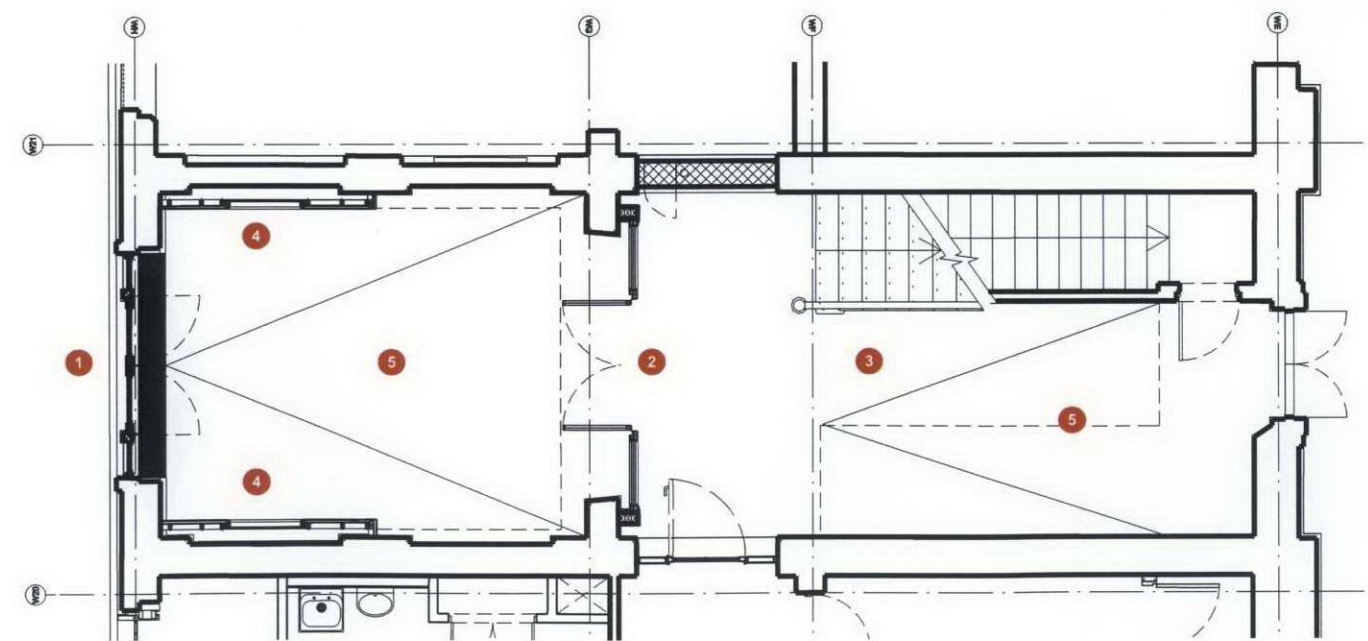
The drawings below show the layout that has been consented within the Planning Application in December 2006.

Annotated in red are changes to the current scheme. These variations reflect design development with NR and EH/LBC and generally enhance the existing fabric.



Northern Office Entrance, Ground Floor Plan - Consented Design, December 2006  
1:50 @ A3

- 1 Screen G21/D1a to be adjusted to accommodate raised concourse level. This will be done by taking out a splice in the upper part of the middle glazed section of the whole screen, to maintain the proportions of the bottom fielded panels.
- 2 Internal glass screen recessed behind the arch in order to leave the visual impression of the arch uninterrupted when seen from the concourse.
- 3 Lift removed and installed at another location in the WRB.
- 4 New lacquered panelling on walls and ceiling in entrance of reception. The panelling conceals vertical and horizontal services and incorporates the two radiators.
- 5 New reversible timber flooring laid on top of the existing floor. The existing floor is retained and protected in situ. The raised floor ramps down to accommodate the 200 mm difference in level between Platform 8 and the new concourse.



Northern Office Entrance, Ground Floor Plan - Proposed Scheme  
1:50 @ A3