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Miranda House

58 Grafton Way, London W1T 5DL

Access & Inclusivity Statement

Prepared by All Clear Designs Ltd

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## 1.0 Introduction

This document sets out the issues related to access for disabled people in the upgrading of Miranda House for its continued use as a Museum.

### 1.1 Context

Documents which relate to access and inclusivity are developed under a document hierarchy as follows:

1. Access Statement (this document)	A detailed document containing expanded descriptions explaining how the framework has been implemented.
2. Building Regulations Access Statement	A document accompanying the building regulations application for each of the buildings/areas being applied for individually. This document will contain a further level of detailed description to accompany the increased level of detail of the Building Regulations submission.

### 1.2 Scope

This Access Statement contains an explanation of measures that will be incorporated within the submitted scheme for Miranda House in its conversion as a museum and indicates how the design meets the required design standards, good practice guidance and Building Regulations access requirements.

The statement takes into account the needs of people with mobility impairments including wheelchair users and those with sensory and cognitive impairments. However, it is recognised that the issues considered in this report will affect the convenience of access for all occupants, not just disabled people.

This Access Statement is based on the strategies set out in CABE guidelines including:

- Explanation of policy and approach to access;
- Sources of advice and guidance on accessibility;
- Details of consultations undertaken or planned;
- Details of access consultant involvement;
- Explanation of specific issues affecting accessibility and details of access solutions adopted; and
- Details of potential management policies and procedures to be adopted to enhance and maintain accessibility.

Areas where technical or other constraints have prevented or constrained the application of the principles set out in the above strategy are highlighted as appropriate.

This Access Statement is based on, and should be read in conjunction with, the submitted information and drawings provided by Studio Downie Architects.

### 1.3 Role of Access Consultant

The access consultant has been actively involved in the preparation of the submitted proposals. Their role is to advise the design team and appraise elements of the design at the relevant stages of the design process to ensure that the best possible level of access is achieved and that the proposals meet relevant legislation and recognised good practice guidance. The consultant also provides

recommendations of measures that can be incorporated within the scheme to facilitate access and use by disabled people.

It is intended that the access consultancy services will ensure the integration of accessibility measures into the proposed public realm areas whilst also maintaining the overall concept of the design.

#### 1.4 Criteria for assessment and design guidance references

The following documents and guidance are used for assessment and advice to the extent they are applicable to a building submission:

- GLA, Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment, April 2004;
- Building Regulations Part M, *Approved Document M*, 2004 edition;
- British Standard BS8300:2010A Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people – Code of Practice;
- DETR, Parking for Disabled People, Traffic Advisory Leaflet 5/95, 1995
- Other currently recognised good practice design guidance including *Sign Design Guide*, (SDS, 2000); *Guidance on the use of Tactile Paving* (UK, DETR), *Inclusive Mobility* (DoT); *Designing for Accessibility* (CAE, 2004), *The Access Manual*, (Blackwell, 2006) and *Manual for Streets* (DfT and DCLG 2007).

It is also necessary to observe reasonable functional and financial practicalities and to take into account the historic nature of Miranda House.

#### 1.5 Factors contributing to accessibility

This Access Statement considers accessibility at an early stage in the design. Detailed design issues such as fixtures, fittings, street furniture, play equipment, lighting, communication systems, management and other issues which contribute to the accessibility of the services and facilities provided will need to be considered in the future.

The individual needs of visitors cannot always be known in advance, thus it is acknowledged that further adjustments to estate management policy or procedure or to the physical features of the landscaping may become necessary. However, it is the intention of the design team to ensure that the need for further physical alterations and the inevitable cost implication of this is reduced to a minimum.

## 2.0 Miranda House

The intention is to convert Miranda House into an exhibition for public access and office accommodation related to that use.

Miranda House was the residence of **Francisco de Miranda**, the *Precursor* of Venezuelan and Latin American independence, during the last years he spent in London before he set out on his second attempt to liberate Venezuela from Spanish rule. The site has been referred to as "the most historic Venezuelan site outside Venezuela".

### 2.1 Existing Description

Miranda house has a front entrance from Grafton way which has a step up from the pavement of approximately 170mm and then an entrance step of 100mm and a threshold of 60mm.

Once inside the building The ground floor reception rooms are on the level of the entrance corridor, with the office then down a series of steps.

The floor below contains existing store rooms and reading room, and the floors above contain further reception rooms and attic rooms, accessed from the central stairwell.

### 2.2 Access for Disabled people to the proposal

The proposal is to alter the building to accommodate facilities available to the public in the form of a reading room, a museum and seminar rooms, with offices related to the functions of these elements.

While this is a historic house, the degree to which it is being opened up to the public to enhance the interpretation of the property, means that access for disabled people should be considered to the fullest extent, while respecting the historic nature of the building and the existing fabric.

The option to install a passenger lift as an independent element, connected to the building, appears to properly balance the needs to provide access for people with ambulant disabilities. The building, on each floor, has generous circulation patterns and therefore the lift will allow the widest use of this building by wheelchair users and by the large and increasing number of people who have a mobility disability.

There is a large risk if the property is vested with unique facilities as proposed, and no lift is installed, that there could be an action under the powers of the Equalities Act 2010.

A part of the act also relates to the requirements for Local Authorities to be proactive in their consideration of the needs of disabled people in their dealings.

### 3.0 Miranda House: Proposals

The proposal is to provide new facilities within the building connected floor to floor with a passenger lift in a freestanding tower, and bridge links to the existing floors.

#### 3.1 Parking

Parking is not affected by this application

#### 3.2 Main Entrances

The main entrance presents a 110 mm step up from the pavement level and then a series of steps into the building.

A regularly used method to overcome the initial step up is to vault the pavement either side of the entrance platform, but it is felt that this would create a visually obtrusive solution as there is regular and prominent series of railings that would be obscured either side of the property.

It is therefore proposed to install an access platform lift located within the existing front lightwell providing access to the lower ground floor of the house and through to a new main lift to the rear. To accommodate this, the existing metal stair to the front lightwell will be removed and a new stair will be installed with a revised layout. The existing gate / railings will be adjusted to provide separate access to the platform lift and stair.

The illustrations below indicates the minimal glass and stainless steel design we wish to install subject to the manufacturer's detailed requirements.



#### 3.3 Vertical Circulation

It is proposed to install a new lift to the rear of the building access through the Library and Courtyard.

The lift will meet the requirements of Part M of the Building regulations and BS/EN 81-70 2003.

The circulation core has been located to respect the historic nature of the building though it is well placed to access all of the facilities.

The lift will provide access to all of the facilities and allow disabled people to visit the building and to work in the building.

#### 3.4 Stairs

The stairs will not be altered and do not currently meet Part M of the building Regulations, but they are within the range of usability of a house of this historic nature.

Stair treads (nosings) will be articulated within the décor to allow people with a visual disability to navigate, and the light level on the stairs will be in line with the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations.

### **3.5 Doors**

The existing doors generally offer good clear opening widths and will only need to be altered where their functions are changing

### **3.6 Floor Finishes**

Floor finishes in public areas will provide a slip resistance equal to or greater than R10 (to meet DIN51130:2004).

### **3.7 Sanitary Accommodation**

Accessible toilet accommodation will be provided within the basement rear building and will comply with Part M of the Building Regulations and BS8300:2010.

### **3.8 Escape Arrangements**

This is a small building and areas of refuge will be installed into the building to relate to the central staircase.

Management procedures will be put in place by the operator to ensure that refuges are checked in the event of an emergency and/or for staff to respond to a disabled person in the refuge.

Staff will be suitably trained to assist disabled people and to assist with use of evacuation chairs where provided.

Operator and estate management policy, procedures and practices will be developed together with a means of escape strategy for disabled people, whether staff or visitors. Personal Emergency Egress Plans (PEEP) for individual disabled users will be developed as required.

### **3.9 General Details**

Details of the following areas and how they will be made accessible shall be provided as the scheme develops:

- decoration
- lighting
- service counters
- sanitaryware selection and layouts
- fire alarm details
- lift details
- toilet layout details
- signage
- furniture Selection
- kitchen layout – each of which will be accessible for wheelchair users
- employment opportunities.

## **4.0 Opinion**

It is our opinion that the proposal to convert Miranda House to have the publicly accessed facilities means that it needs to be altered to include facilities for disabled people.

The facilities currently proposed are felt to be reasonable in terms of providing access for disabled people and respecting the historic nature of the building.