

King's Cross Central General Partner Ltd
Aries GNH (GP) Ltd

Great Northern Hotel Access & Inclusivity Statement

June 2010



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1.0 Introduction

This document sets out the process adopted by the developer to create an accessible and inclusive environment through the refurbishment of the Grade II Listed Great Northern Hotel at King's Cross Central (KXC).

It has been prepared in response to Condition 19 (Access Statement) of the KXC outline planning permission 2004/2307/P granted in December 2006 and Section V of the associated Section 106 Agreement relating to Access and Inclusivity.

1.1 Context

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

1. King's Cross Central Access and Inclusivity Strategy (Sept 2005)	A scene setting document establishing the principles and containing the master plan philosophy and over arching strategies,
2. Access Statement (this document)	A detailed document containing expanded descriptions explaining how the framework has been implemented in the individual schemes.
3. 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 Great Northern Hotel

The Great Northern Hotel is located to the South of the KXC site on the eastern edge of Pancras Road and immediately to the west of the new King's Cross Western Concourse (currently under construction). It consists of an existing Grade II listed hotel building which under the submitted proposals, will be refurbished to contain;

- Hotel bedroom accommodation (comprising 93 bedrooms) ;
- 1st floor restaurant;
- Ground floor public bar area; and
- Ancillary hotel functions, including basement gym.

1.3 Public Realm

There is no public realm associated with this submission.

1.4 Scope

In addition to the KXC Outline Planning Permission, the Great Northern Hotel is already the subject of a full planning permission and listed building consent for the creation of an arcade at street level, both granted in November 2007 (refs. 2006/3220/P and 2006/3222/P respectively). This statement updates the Access Statement which accompanied those submissions in relation to the proposed refurbishment scheme.

Further a separate planning permission dated November 2007 (ref 2006/3387/P) submitted by Network Rail, permits, among other things, a new Western Concourse for Kings Cross Station which abuts the east façade of the Great Northern Hotel, and a taxi pick-up/public realm on the west façade. The latter was recently granted detailed approval in January 2010 ref 2009/5539/P.

This Access Statement contains an explanation of measures that will be incorporated within the proposals to facilitate access and use by all people including disabled people 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 the King's Cross Central Access and Inclusivity Strategy (September 2005) and develops these as set out in Appendix D of that document, 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 (e.g. the listed status of the building) have prevented or constrained the application of the principles set out in the above strategy are highlighted as appropriate.

The areas covered in the building include entrances, horizontal circulation, vertical circulation, facilities and sanitary accommodation.

At this stage the statement does not cover the operational aspects in detail, but it identifies and comments on areas where management procedures are likely to be required to ensure good accessibility.

This Access Statement is based on the planning submission, information reports and drawings provided by the Architects, Dexter Moren Associates, and Interior Designers, David Archer Architects. These documents should be referred to while reading this report.

1.5 Role of Access Consultant

The access consultant has been actively involved in the preparation of the proposals for the building. 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 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 building whilst also maintaining the overall concept of the design.

1.6 Criteria for assessment and design guidance references

The following documents and guidance are used for assessment and advice:

- Argent (King's Cross) Limited, *King's Cross Central Access and Inclusivity Strategy*, September 2005
- GLA, *Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment*, April 2004;
- Building Regulations Part M, *Approved Document M*, 2004 edition;
- British Standard *BS8300:2009 Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people – Code of Practice*;
- British Standard *BS5588 part 8:1999 Fire precautions in the design, construction and use of buildings: Code of practice for means of escape for disabled people*
- DETR, *Parking for Disabled People, Traffic Advisory Leaflet 5/95*, 1995
- GLA, *Best Practice Guidance: Wheelchair Accessible Housing*, September 2007
- Joseph Rowntree Trust, *Lifetime Homes Standards*, 1999
- 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 the Great Northern Hotel building.

Wherever possible, the design team has gone beyond the minimum requirements of Part M (Building Regulations) and the guidance provided in the Approved Document M. This assists occupiers in meeting their duties under the Disability Discrimination Act.

1.7 Consultation

Consultation has taken place with the King's Cross Access Forum with the latest meeting (related to this building) being held in February 2010. These meetings have been developed as a method of ensuring that there is adequate user input into the design development process. Issues raised at these meetings have been noted and where possible have been incorporated into the proposals.

Changes that have been made to the scheme as a direct result of consultation with the Access Forum include the following:

- The ground floor bar has been altered to have level access;
- Access to the restaurant on the first floor is via a clarified ramped route;
- The main lifts to all floors no longer provide the platform lift function previously required by the raised bar; and
- A suite of accessible bedrooms have been designed to have interconnecting doors to allow a facilitator/carer to stay in the adjacent room.

1.8 Factors contributing to accessibility

This Access Statement considers accessibility at an early stage in the design. Detailed design issues such as fixtures, fittings, furniture, equipment, internal decoration, 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.

As noted previously, the Great Northern Hotel is an existing listed building. The design team has sought to achieve a balance between the historic needs of the building and the desire to provide the fullest possible access for disabled people. Where the historic fabric has caused difficulties, these will be highlighted.

The individual needs of visitors cannot always be known in advance, thus it is acknowledged that further adjustments to management policy or procedure or to the physical features of the building (subject to listed building consent where applicable) 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 The proposals

2.1 Summary

The Great Northern Hotel is located to the South of the KXC site, between King's Cross and St. Pancras Stations. It is bound on the western edge by the King's Cross Station taxi pick-up and Pancras Road, on its eastern edge by the new King's Cross Western Concourse and to the north and south by public realm. Following completion of the arcade works at ground floor level (which were subject to a separate planning permission and listed building consent); the submitted proposals include the sensitive refurbishment of the existing Grade II listed hotel building to provide;

- Hotel bedroom accommodation (comprising 93 bedrooms) ;
- 1st floor restaurant;
- Ground floor public bar area; and
- Ancillary hotel functions, including basement gym.

Further details of the proposals and the process adopted by the team to create an accessible and inclusive environment throughout the scheme are outlined in the following two chapters which consider the building proposals in turn.

2.2 Construction Programme

An indication of the anticipated construction programme is attached as Appendix 2

Contractors will be appointed and a detailed construction programme devised in the future.

Accessibility issues will need to be considered throughout the detailed design and construction programme and in the final management of the scheme.

Future decisions affecting accessibility will include:

- Signage/wayfinding within the building;
- Choice of materials;
- Detailed design issues including fixtures, fittings, furniture, equipment, internal decoration, lighting and communication systems; and
- Future management procedures.

Building Regulations submissions will be required to address detailed design issues, for which the required access statement will be submitted. During the construction process and through the Building Regulations submissions the team will continue to liaise with the Council and the King's Cross Access Forum on relevant matters affecting accessibility.

3.0 Great Northern Hotel

3.1 Description of building

The Great Northern Hotel first opened in 1854 to serve King's Cross Station. It was designed by Lewis Cubitt and built to a curved plan as a response to the former alignment of Pancras Road. Major alterations have already taken place to the ground floor pursuant to an earlier planning permission and listed building consent granted in November 2007 (refs. 2006/3220/P and 2006/3222/L respectively) to create an arcade area around the base of the hotel.

The building has seven floors, including a basement and attic storey. It is Grade II listed as a good quality, early example of a purpose built railway hotel and for its group value with King's Cross Station and neighbouring St. Pancras Station.

When complete, the refurbished hotel will consist of the facilities listed in paragraph 2.1. Due to the building's listed status, significant changes to the structure and layout of the building are limited, save for those associated with the completed arcade works at ground floor level.

3.2 Entrances and exits

The Great Northern Hotel includes a number of public entrances to the ground floor uses, in particular, a main entrance to the reception/concierge on the west elevation onto Pancras Road, a secondary entrance on the eastern elevation from the western concourse/arcade and two entrances to the bar on the east and west facades. The retail unit has its own entrance onto the arcade.

All ground floor entrances will provide level thresholds, solid entrance matting and will be clearly articulated within the building elevation by both light and form.

Glazed doors and screens will have manifestation in line with guidance in Part M.

All new fire exits have level thresholds and openings in line with guidance in Part M.

Doors opening out from the building are either fire escapes, or will be sufficiently recessed into the façade that they are not opening in their entirety onto a circulation route.

Entrance doors will either be automated or staffed by doormen to assist users.

3.3 Vertical Circulation

3.3.1 Lifts

Two public lifts will provide level access from the ground floor to the first floor restaurant, bedroom floors and basement public areas. Further, a separate goods/servicing lift will operate between all floors. This is located away from public areas and will be used by staff only.

All lifts will meet or exceed the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations and BS/EN 81-70 2003.

Currently due to the restricted space available in the listed building fabric, the lifts are proposed to be 8-person lifts with car dimensions of approximately 1100mm by 1400mm and door openings of 900mm wide. They will therefore have half height mirrored finish to the rear wall to assist wheelchair users to reverse out of the lift. There is a goods lift to take servicing and refuse trolleys.

3.3.2 Stairs

New stairs will meet Part M of the Building Regulations and BS8300:2009 guidelines for use by people with ambulant and visual disabilities.

Existing stairs will remain and currently have an accessible layout with a riser of 150mm and goings of approximately 325mm. The stairs are clearly articulated within the building cores and the communal entrance lobby.

3.4 Doors

All publicly accessed doors will provide a minimum clear opening width of 800mm (1000mm for entrances) and will be provided with visual manifestations where glazed, and/or vision panels where solid and on an access route.

Entrance doors to the building will need to be automated as each leaf is below 1000mm.

Air pressure differentials can sometimes make the doors difficult to open. In this eventuality, automated entrance doors will be utilised.

All bedroom doors will meet the requirements of the Building Regulations for existing buildings.

3.5 Floor Finishes

Floor finishes in public areas will provide a slip resistance equal to or greater than R11 (to meet DIN51130:2004).

The finishes and lighting will be selected to provide a visually well modelled space which assists people with partial vision.

3.6 Escape Arrangements

Corridors and circulation routes provide a minimum 1200mm clear width, although most corridors far exceed this width (approximately 2300mm outside bedrooms). As stated above, all fire exit doors have level thresholds.

Areas of refuge have been provided at all levels within the Hotel. Basement and First floor refuges are in the escape stair lobbies whilst the Second to Fifth floor refuges are located in the corridors (to comply with BS 5588 part 8).

Management procedures will be put in place by the operator and the hotel management 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. Operator and hotel 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 (e.g. staff) will be developed as required.

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

3.7 Toilet Facilities

Public WCs are located in the basement and can be accessed from all levels via the main lift lobby. Separate male and female WCs are proposed which will include specific cubicles for

those with ambulant difficulties. WC facilities were explored at ground floor level. However, area constraints within the listed building structure meant this was not possible.

A pair of lifts has been provided to ensure that the journey to the basement will not add a significant amount of time to the user.

WCs will meet Part M of the Building Regulations and BS8300:2009 in terms of layout requirements, materials and finishes. External assistance alarms will also be provided in the accessible cubicles which will connect to the reception desk.

3.8 Parking

An overall site-wide strategy for parking has been approved under the KXC outline planning permission, with maximum numbers of parking spaces agreed, and appropriate percentages of parking provision for disabled people.

There is no car parking specifically allocated to the Great Northern Hotel. Parking is, however, provided elsewhere in the estate, for example within the multi-storey car park in Building T1. Consultation with the King's Cross Access Forum highlighted a possible need to provide some wheelchair parking near to the building. It is not possible to provide parking within the building due to the nature of the existing listed structure or to accommodate a parking bay adjacent to the building due to the building's location at a very busy transport interchange and taxi pick-up. Its proximity to King's Cross St. Pancras underground station means there is also no scope for expansion of the basement area. Instead, it is proposed that a 'valet' style of parking could be offered where a disabled user can arrive at the Hotel; probably utilising the allocated hotel service bay, and their car will be parked elsewhere on their behalf.

3.9 Specific Areas and Facilities

3.9.1 Restaurant

The restaurant is located on the first floor. Access to the restaurant from the lift lobby is via an open entrance, clear of doors, and turning into a corridor 1200mm wide. There are local restrictions in width due to the historic fabric of the building, but these are always on straight sections of corridor. There is a platform at the change in direction and fire doors at regular intervals. These will either be on a holdback system or automated so that they do not interfere with the use of the corridor. Due to a change in floor level, a set of steps leads up from the corridor into the main restaurant entrance.

The design team investigated several design options for the insertion of mechanical products and ramps to provide wheeled access into the restaurant. The proposed ramp leading from the main corridor and behind the bar area was considered the most appropriate option on the basis that it offered an acceptable gradient in compliance with Part M and a permanent access solution. The ramp provides a slope of 1:16 with two intermediate landings where the ramp changes direction. Handrails etc will be provided to meet building regulations guidance. The fire door between the ramp and the restaurant will be on a holdback system or automated for ease of opening.

3.9.2 Bar Area

The ground floor bar area can be accessed from the western concourse/arcade, a separate entrance on the west façade or the main entrance on the west elevation; all on the level. All of the bar area will also be level. The bar will be designed with dropped sections to assist disabled people in ordering, and drinks will be delivered to tables.

Furniture selection and placement will be coordinated to assist people with visual disabilities to navigate the space and allow space for wheelchair access/manoeuvring.

3.9.3 Reception Foyer

The ground floor reception is fully accessible from both the arcade and the main entrance on Pancras Road. Level access is provided from the foyer to the guest lifts and the bar, ensuring that all of the public ground floor areas are accessible to wheelchair users and people with ambulant difficulties.

It is intended that the cashier /concierge desk will include a lowered counter for wheelchair users. An induction loop will also be provided.

3.9.4 Hotel Gym

A small gym is intended for the use of residents in the basement of the Hotel. No formal changing rooms are provided as changing and bathing is expected to take place in the user's hotel room. Access to the Gym will then be via the lifts/stairs.

Gym equipment will be selected to be accessible to disabled users.

3.10 Wheelchair Accessible Bedrooms

5 accessible bedrooms have been provided and distributed so that there is one on each guestroom floor (i.e. levels 1-5). The following are features are specific to these rooms:

- Two rooms (shown on submitted drawings as 106 and 206) have been provided with an interconnecting door to the neighbouring room should a user need to book for a facilitator/carer.
- All rooms will have wheelchair accessible bathrooms with flush floor shower arrangements. These have been arranged so that the water from shower use does not interfere with the use of the rest of the bathroom.
- All rooms provide for wheelchair access to the bed space. Working within the constraints of the existing room layouts, an activity/transfer space of 1200mm x 1200mm by the bed has been achieved, in line with Lifetime homes and wheelchair housing guidance.
- Due to the restricted nature of the listed building, and the need to limit the changes to the structural fabric that servicing routes and door openings could cause, the room layouts have not been handed on alternate floors. However the side and end of the bed is available and the shower/WC area allows full frontal and lateral transfer to be utilised.

Figure 1 shows the layout of a typical wheelchair accessible room.

3.12 Construction Programme

An indication of the anticipated construction programme for the refurbishment of the Great Northern Hotel is attached as Appendix 2. Contractors will be appointed and a detailed construction programme devised in the future.

Accessibility issues will need to be considered throughout the detailed design and construction programme and in the final management of the scheme.

Future decisions affecting accessibility will include:

- Signage/wayfinding within the building and externally;
- Choice of materials;
- Detailed design issues including fixtures, fitting, furniture, equipment, internal decoration, lighting and communications systems; and
- Future management procedures.

Building Regulations submissions will be required to address detailed design issues, for which the required access statement will be submitted. During the construction process and through the Building Regulations submission, the team will continue to liaise with the Council and the King's Cross Access Forum on relevant matters affecting accessibility.

Appendix 1

Management issues

The following management issues will be brought to the attention of relevant parties to ensure that access is achieved and maintained:

- **doors** – adjustment of door closers; ironmongery to be kept in good working order;
- **horizontal circulation** – keep routes free from obstructions and furniture layouts/seating arrangements accessible;
- **vertical circulation** – regular checking of lifts to ensure floor of car aligns with finished floor level;
- **WCs** – checks to ensure that manoeuvring space in accessible compartments is not obstructed by bins, sanitary disposal equipment etc; replenishment of toilet paper and paper towels in accessible WCs as well as other WCs;
- **communication** – new signs to integrate with existing sign system, no ad hoc homemade signs; all information to be kept up-to-date; signers and translation services to be provided as necessary; appropriate provision of accurate access information and other literature;
- **hearing enhancement systems** – advertising the availability of the system; and regular checking and maintenance of systems;
- **alarm systems** – checking of systems; staff training in procedures;
- **surfaces** – ensuring cleaning does not cause slippery surfaces; maintaining junctions to avoid worn surfaces becoming tripping hazards; replacing surfaces like with like; maintaining colour contrast in redecoration;
- **lighting** – prompt replacement of bulbs; keeping windows and light fittings clean;
- **means of escape** – specific evacuation strategies to be devised for people who need assistance, both staff and visitors; staff training; regular practice drills; maintenance of fittings and equipment; reviewing evacuation procedures;
- **security** – ensuring security procedures do not conflict with accessibility good practice;
- **training** – staff training is critical to maintain access and to provide accessible services and employment opportunities. Training can cover areas such as disability awareness and equality, use of equipment such as platform lifts and induction loops, British Sign Language, hearing awareness, clear lip speaking, guiding people with visual impairments and general access awareness.
- **health and safety policies** – implementation of policies on access, risk assessment;
- **responsibilities for access** – identification of responsible people to approve improvements, set priorities, ensure access is included in maintenance and refurbishment programmes, provide auxiliary aids, review numbers of disabled people using a service
- **funding for access improvements** – identification of specific access funds or grants; funds for specific employees such as ‘Access to work’; use of the maintenance budget;
- **policy review** – regular reviews of all policies, practices and procedures affecting access.

Appendix 2

Construction Timetable



all clear designs

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