

## Heritage Statement

Job No: **GNH** [Great northern Hotel]  
Job: Great Northern Hotel, Pancras Road  
Date: March 2018

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The proposal for the works at the Great Northern Hotel are based on the careful research and historic building analysis both of the building itself and its nearby neighbors and the entire team have endeavored to ensure that the designs do not affect the fabric of the historic building and that the significance of the setting of the building is not affected. The alterations to the martini bar area and associated WC facilities affect a minimal amount of historic fabric, but do not affect the significance by ensuring that historic fabric is retained to allow the curve of the corridor to be fully read.

### 2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 The Great Northern Hotel was built on the site in 1854. Its shape is partly due to the original curved design of Old St Pancras Road, and the setting out of the east façade in relation to Kings Cross original ticket office. Old St Pancras Road was straightened and re-aligned to its current location after 1871.
- 2.2 The building is Grade 2 Listed (1984) – TQ3083SW PANCRAS ROAD 798-1/85/1266 (East Side) 06/07/84 Great Northern Hotel and attached railings. Hotel. 1854, by Lewis Cubbit. Yellow stock brick with stucco dressings. Slate roof with pediment dormers. Crescent shaped building. Concave main façade towards King's Cross Station, Euston Road.
- 2.3 Exterior – 5 storeys, attic and basement. 18 windows wide; southern return 5 windows with slightly advanced central bay. Sixth and thirteenth bays slightly advanced with tripartite windows and stucco dressings; 1st and 2nd floors, triangular pediments and segmental pediments respectively. Below that to left hand side, the main entrance with cast-iron and wood portico; round-arched glazing. Round-arched ground floor openings with stucco keystones and impost bands. Plain stucco bands at 1st, 2nd, and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor levels. Other windows square-headed, 1st to 3rd floor with stucco architraves. Modillion cornice. Prominent slab chimneystacks. Road façade similar.
- 2.4 Subsidiary Features – attached cast iron railings of geometric design to areas
- 2.5 The curved plan reflects the original alignment of Pancras Place, now Pancras Road. The hotel was one of the first to include rooms on the "continental system" with bedrooms en-suite with sitting rooms. The company prided itself on the fireproof construction of the hotel, with thick walls dividing every room and with the corridors constructed of

brick arches supported by iron girders. (Hunter M and Thorne R (eds.): Change at King's Cross: London: -1990: 77-79).



### 3.0 Listing and Conservation Area

- 3.1 The Great Northern Hotel is Listed Grade II. It is located between the Grade I listed Kings Cross Station and the Grade I listed St Pancras Station. Together they are considered an important group of buildings that reflect the history and power of the history of the railway.
- 3.2 The building is situated within the Kings Cross Conservation Area and is noted in Camden's Conservation Area Appraisal as: *"The Great Northern Hotel, also designed by the architect Lewis Cubitt, was opened in 1854. It has five and a half storeys with attic storey and basement and was tall for its time. It is built on a curved plan, for the following reason: the western elevation follows the curved alignment of Old St Pancras Road immediately to the west. This road was realigned to the west to its present location after the hotel was built. The eastern side of the hotel was designed to directly address the western elevation to King's Cross Station, where the projecting booking office forms the focus of the western range. The central doorway of the former booking office appears to be the geometric focus of the hotel's curved elevation. There are attached railings to the basement areas at front and back. The curved form presents a pleasing contrast with the long straight side elevations of the stations. The hotel is Italianate in style; with its classical details, it is more elaborate than its station. It has a hipped slate roof with tall chimneys. It is built of yellow stock brick with stucco details. The eastern elevation has a six-window central bay and five-window outer bays, separated by staircase bays with tripartite windows, slightly projecting. The ground floor windows are plain and semi circular headed and the windows to the first, second and third floors are square headed, with moulded stucco architraves. The fourth floor windows are plain and the dormer windows have pediments. The treatment of windows to the main*

elevation therefore is progressively simpler from the 1st floor up. Stucco stringcourses are between the ground, first and second floors and there is a deeply moulded main cornice with dentil course above the top floor. The west elevation is longer than the east elevation and is similar. It has seven bays of windows in the central section with five bays to the sides. The rear staircase bays are set forward from the hotel's building line and have rusticated pilasters. The corners have deeply moulded quoins. A single storey extension and a white painted fire escape on the west elevation detract from the overall quality. . [this was altered and removed during the latest works] The end elevations have rectangular windows with mouldings. The hotel is an important component in a group with the stations. It also has its own strong, but not overbearing, presence. When viewed from areas south east of King's Cross station, including looking west from Gray's Inn Road, the south east elevation can be seen directly. Views of it are also framed between the two stations, forming a strong ensemble. It is also visible in views from streets perpendicular from Euston Road, where this view is framed."



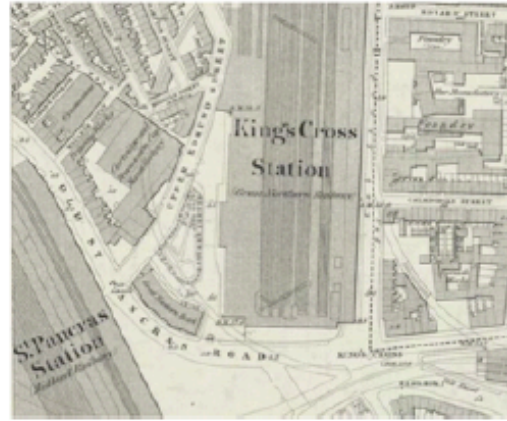
- 3.3 The Ordinance Survey maps illustrate and confirm the importance of the Great Northern Hotel as part of the group and in its own right:
  - 3.3.1 OS Map 1868-1873. Illustrates the Old St Pancras Road curved to run in front of King's Cross Station
  - 3.3.2 OS Map 1871. Illustrates a small amount of alteration with addition of a small square building to the east of the GNH. Also indicates the extra protection to entrance of the hotel, to the North
  - 3.3.3 OS Map 1895. The change of the Pancras Road and additions to the front elevation of Kings Cross Station



- 3.3.4 OS Map 1913(S) 1915(P). Illustrates further clarification of glazed roof, alteration of buildings to the entrance of King's Cross station and a large extension to the south façade of the GNH
- 3.3.5 OS Map 1938. Illustrates no detailed alteration to the enlarged hotel and further alteration to the front entrance of Kings Cross.
- 3.3.6 OS map 1952(S)-53(P). Illustrates the additions and alterations of the extension of the hotel and no further altered works visible from the maps.



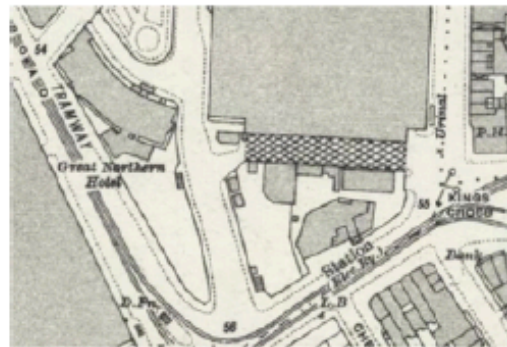
1868-73



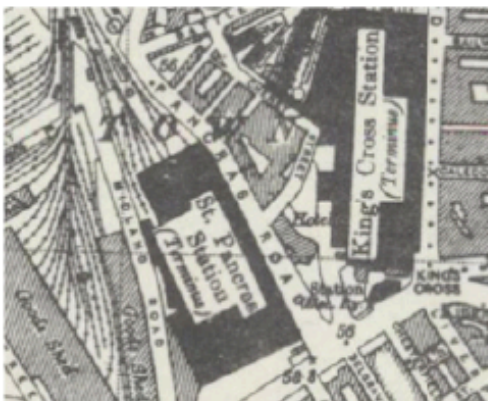
1871



1895



1913



1938



1952-53.

#### 4.0 Proposed Development

- 4.1 With regards to conservation, all proposals have impact upon the historic fabric of the heritage asset and in this respect the proposal has

been assessed as to its effect on the significance of the historic building.

- 4.2 The refurbishment of two bedrooms to provide WC facilities and further public space has a minor/neutral impact upon the historic fabric as it retains the proportions and dimensions as well as maintaining the identifiable historic curve of the corridor.
- 4.3 The existing condition of the building is good following its refurbishment between 2009-2011. However, now the client has settled in and is utilizing the spaces the areas where the current hotel cannot supply the accommodation that people expect of this 5\* hotel have come to the fore.
- 4.4 The proposals being made by AHA respect the historic character of these areas. They do not alter the floor plans of the rooms nor do they alter the significance of the Heritage Asset. They seek to retain the historic features and where possible enhance the historic plan form and significance of the Heritage Asset.
- 4.5 The martini lounge bar as approved should be a comfortable and relaxed space that can be used by hotel guests and hired for functions. The addition of the Martini Lounge Bar will allow the condition and standard of the hotel to be maintained. In order for this to successfully managed there must be adequate facilities available and accessible to guests and patrons.

## 5.0 Planning Consideration

- 5.1 The main legislation concerning the protection of listed buildings and conservation areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Act deals with the listing of buildings of special architectural or historic interest, the authorization of works affecting Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and other supplemental matters affecting the historic environment. Of particular relevance are sections 16 and 66 of the Act regarding the setting of listed buildings, and Section 69 of the Act that deals with conservation areas. Listed Buildings are given statutory protection through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This protection is achieved by the inclusion of suitable buildings within the lists of buildings of special architectural and historic interest (Listed Buildings) and the designation of Conservation Areas. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's national policies on different aspects of spatial planning in England and came into effect on the 27th March 2012 at 12:30hrs. Guidance on the protection of historic buildings, Conservation Areas, historic parks and gardens and other elements of the historic environment is provided in Section 12 Paragraphs 126-141. Guidance on the interpretation of the document is still provided by the EH document: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide. (March 2010), which was written in response to PPS5, the previous Planning Policy which has now been superseded by the NPPF (March 2012).
- 5.2 **National Policy (NPPF):** The Government's Objectives 128. ... *The level of detail should be appropriate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal not he significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary ...*
- 5.3 This Heritage Statement has reviewed the context, history and significance of the buildings. The analysis has been undertaken

through the study of the public documents available in various archives and local history libraries in London including the Metropolitan Archives, Camden Local History and the National Archives.

- 5.4 129. *Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimize conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*
- 5.5 The NPPF is a material consideration in the decision making process for Planning and Listed Building applications. In consideration of the Government's latest guidance we have analysed the relevant clauses of the NPPF. The NPPF recognizes in paragraph 17 that one of the 12 core Land Use Principles which should underpin plan making and decision taking is to "*Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life this and future generations.*"
- 5.6 Relevant guidance to the proposals for the Hotel is provided in Historic England's (formerly English Heritage) Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide on alterations to realize the optimum viable use of an asset.
- 5.6.1 88. *Proposals for the development of a heritage asset will ideally be for its optimum viable use. By their nature, some heritage assets have limited or even no economic end use.*
- 5.6.2 The proposals for the martini lounge WCs have been drawn up to secure its commercial future and to do this in a sympathetic manner, which will preserve and enhance its historic fabric and setting.
- 5.6.3 89. *It is important that any use is viable, not just for the owner but also for the future conservation of the asset. Viable uses will fund future maintenance*
- 5.6.4 The proposals have been designed to continue the viable economic use of the Heritage Assets as a high-class hotel.
- 5.6.5 Guidance is also provided on the Setting of Listed Buildings:
- 5.6.6 113. *Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral.*
- 5.6.7 The proposals are sympathetic and attentive to the setting of the Heritage Asset. They provide the required spaces for the hotel with the least amount of impact on the setting and historic fabric of the heritage asset.
- 5.6.8 *Decision-makers should look for opportunities to enhance or better reveal the significance of the asset through development within the setting. [p137]*
- 5.6.9 The proposals do not harm the setting of the listed building as they can be argued to have a minor impact on the setting by:
- 5.6.9.1 Retaining more of the wall to allow the curve of the building to be read in the Martini Lounge
- 5.7 The significance of the Great Northern Hotel lies in its use as hotel for the two surrounding train stations and the historic use of trains as

transport. The historic use of this building has been maintained through the previous works and this application ensures that the hotel whilst retaining the historic plans of the rooms can use more of the spaces effectively.

- 5.8 **D2 – Heritage (Camden Local Plan 2017):** The Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets. Designated heritage assets include conservation areas and listed buildings. The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:
- 5.8.1 The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
  - 5.8.2 No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
  - 5.8.3 Conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
  - 5.8.4 The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
- 5.9 The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.
- 5.10 **Conservation areas.** In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies when assessing applications within conservation areas. The Council will:
- 5.10.1 Require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;
  - 5.10.2 Resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area;
  - 5.10.3 Resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area; and
  - 5.10.4 Preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area or which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.
- 5.11 **Listed buildings.** To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:
- 5.11.1 Resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;
  - 5.11.2 Resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building; and
  - 5.11.3 Resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.
- 5.12 **Archaeology.** The Council will protect remains of archaeological importance by ensuring acceptable measures are taken proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset to preserve

them and their setting, including physical preservation, where appropriate. Other heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets The Council will seek to protect other heritage assets including non-designated heritage assets (including those on and off the local list), Registered Parks and Gardens and London Squares. The effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, balancing the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

5.13 The standard of the design work by Archer Humphries Architects has been to ensure that the works have a minor impact on the historic fabric and have a minimal, if not neutral approach to the setting of the historic building. This will ensure that hotel guests can enjoy the space. This Heritage Statement explains how the proposals address the issues of access within an historic building context.

5.14 The proposals are in line with the Council's policies. The proposals ensure that the hotel will be enhanced to be one of the most luxurious hotels in London. The quality and design of the proposals has been drawn up to ensure that the historic features of the listed building and its setting within the Conservation Area are also enhanced to ensure that the hotel retains its historic character and appearance. The scheme is in line with the Local Authority's Policy D2 (Heritage).

## 6.0 Assessment of the Application and Conclusions

6.1 The purpose of this report is to advise London Borough of Camden, (LBC), of the extent of surviving historic fabric not affected by the refurbishment of one bedroom to provide WC facilities for the previously approved Martini Lounge bar.

6.2 We believe that the combination of written evidence, the historic drawings and surveys and the onsite investigation provide evidence that the proposed works will not adversely impact on the historic fabric of the Listed Building.