ARCADIS Design & Consultancy for natural and built assets

KINGS CROSS REMODELLING

Statement of Significance

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Incorporating

EC HARRIS BUILT ASSET CONSULTANCY

Hyder

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INTRODUCTION

Project Background

The Kings Cross remodelling project proposes the replacement of life expired infrastructure. This will include new signalling, track and overhead line equipment being renewed in the station throat for a distance of up to 1.5 miles from the buffer stops in the station.,. Kings Cross Station is a Grade I listed building and any alteration or demolitions to the structure will require listed building consent. This document was created to establish and recognise the significance of Kings Cross Station and help to inform the application for listed building consent.

The Site

Kings Cross Station, also known as London Kings Cross, is located in Camden within the city of London. It is adjacent to St Pancras International Railway Station and is connected to the London Underground.

The station is the terminus for many railway lines such as the Central London Railway and the East Coast Main Line to North East England and Scotland. It is one of Britain's busiest stations with an estimated 45 million passengers embarking and disembarking the platforms yearly.

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of this assessment are to:

- assess the character, built form and significance of the Kings Cross Station; and
- establish the history and development of the station

Methodology

The aims of this Statement of Significance were achieved through:

- review of documentary sources and cartographic evidence of the station;
- review of the relevant local, strategic and national heritage planning policy and guidance for listed buildings within Britain;
- preparation of baseline narrative setting out the history and chronological development of the station; and
- assess the building according the forthcoming 2017 Historic England's Conservation Principles.

Sources

Sources used within this statement are (a full list can be seen in the reference section including links and dates viewed for websites):

Policies and Guidance:

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
- Historic England 2017 (forthcoming) Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment
- Historic England 2015 The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3

Websites:

- Histroic England: Kings Cross Station listing https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1078328
- Kings Cross 2018 *The History of Kings Cross* https://www.kingscross.co.uk/history-kings-cross-area

Documents:

- Camden Council 2004 *Conservation Area Statement 22: Kings Cross*
- John McAslan and Partners 2015 *Kings Cross Heritage Partnership Agreement*

Assessment Criteria

The assessment of the significance of the station looks to identify how particular parts of a place and different periods in its evolution contribute to, or detract from, identified heritage values. This approach considers the present character of the station based on the chronological sequence of events that produced it and allows management strategies to be developed that sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets.

Significance (for heritage policy) is defined in NPPF Annex 2 as:

'the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.'

In November 2017 Historic England proposed changes to their *Conservation Principle for Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (2008),the new document has now been adopted (April2018). The new Conservation Principle outlines three value categories, now called interests, which are:

- **Historic Interest:** the way in which an asset can illustrate the story of past events, people and aspects of life.
- **Archaeological Interest:** an asset may hold evidence of a past human activity that could be revealed through investigation at some point.
- **Architectural and Artistic Interest:** derives from the contemporary appreciation of the assets aesthetics.

Historic England's table of significance (**Table 1**) is still in use:

Significance	Factors Determining Significance
International	World Heritage Sites Assets of recognised international importance Assets that contribute to international research objectives
National	Scheduled Monuments Grade I Grade II* and Grade II Listed Buildings Grade I and Grade II* Registered Parks and Gardens Non-designated assets of the quality and importance to be designated Assets that contribute to national research agendas
Regional	Conservation Areas Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens Assets that contribute to regional research objectives
Local	Locally listed buildings Assets compromised by poor preservation and/or poor contextual associations Assets with importance to local interest groups Assets that contribute to local research objectives
Negligible	Assets with little or no archaeological/historical interest

Unknown	The importance of the asset has not been ascertained from available evidence

Table 1: Table of Significance

Assumptions and Limitations

The data used to compile this report consists of secondary information derived from a variety of sources, only some of which have been directly examined for the purposes of this study. The assumption is made that this data, as well as that derived from other secondary sources, is reasonably accurate.

Legislation, Policy and Guidance

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS DOCUMENT WAS WRITTEN PROR TO THE CHANGES IN THE NPPF
PLEASE REFER TO THE PLANNING STATEMENT FOR THE UP TO DATE PARAGRAPHS IN THE NPPF.
(SECTION 16 OF THE NPPF 2019 IS NOW THE RELEVANT HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SECTION)

This statement was undertaken in accordance with current legislation and national plans and policies. Relevant legislation, policy and guidance are outlined below:

Legislation

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The primary legislation relating to Listed Buildings is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which makes provision for the listing of buildings of special architectural or historic interest, designation of conservation areas, and the exercise of planning functions in relation to these. It requires Councils to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a Listed Building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (sections 16 & 66) and to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas (section 72) (HMS0 1990).

Policy

Present government planning policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012). Section 12 of the NPPF, entitled *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* provides guidance for the conservation and investigation of heritage assets and requires local authorities to take the following into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

NPPF Section 12: *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment* sets out the principal national guidance on the importance, management and safeguarding of heritage assets within the planning process.

The aim of NPPF Section 12 is to ensure that Regional Planning Bodies and Local Planning Authorities, developers and owners of heritage assets adopt a consistent and holistic approach to their conservation and to reduce complexity in planning policy relating to proposals that affect them.

To summarise, government guidance provides a framework which:

- requires applicants to provide proportionate information on the significance on heritage assets affected by the proposals and an impact assessment of the proposed development on that significance. This should be in the form of a desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation;
- takes into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and their setting;
- places weight on the conservation of designated heritage assets (which include World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Conservation Areas); and
- requires developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.

Policy guidance concerning Listed Buildings is as follows;

- Paragraph 132 – 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II Listed Building…should be exceptional…'
- Paragraph 134 – 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use'.
- Further guidance on all aspects of the NPPF is provided on the Planning Practice Guidance website which includes a section entitled 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'.

Guidance

GPA 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets 2015

Historic England has also published three *Good Practice Advice (GPA)* notes of which *GPA 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets* is relevant to this study. This document sets out guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas, and landscapes (Historic England 2015). This guidance is currently under review which is due for imminent publication. The revisions will effectively combine setting and historic view guidance previously under separate documents. This has been taken into consideration in this study.

Baseline Information

Development of Kings Cross

The name Kings Cross was given to an area of industry on the periphery of London in the early part of 19th century, the land was considered important but tarnished by the 'polluting' factories which included paint manufacturing and refuse sorting on the southern side of a canal. In a bid to improve the area King George IV commissioned a statue of himself at a crossroads, that statue however attracted much ridicule and it was demolished in 1842, the name, nevertheless, stuck (Kings Cross 2018).

London, in the mid-19th century, was steadily growing and the railway boom was in full swing, which lead to the Great Northern Railway (GNR) to develop their London terminus in the largely underdeveloped area of Kings Cross between 1849 and 1852. The GNR purchased land for the station to the south of the canal and land to the north, which was mainly fields at this time, for its goods station and steam locomotive depot (Kings Cross 2018).

The station was designed in the plain Italianate style by Lewis Cubitt and built by his nephew Joseph Cubitt, an engineer, between 1850 and 1852. The building is largely constructed with hand-made red and yellow London stock brick with dark blue engineering brick for detailing. The roof is clad in Welsh slate and limestone and sandstone are used for lintels, sills and copings. Sandstone is also used for bridge abutments and tunnel portals while a softwood is used for external doors and windows. Stucco is used for architectural mouldings and cast and wrought iron are used in some decorative iron work. When it opened, Kings Cross was the largest railway station in Britain (Camden Council 2004).

The original design of the station comprised of two platforms, one for arrivals, to the east, and one for departures, to the west, these platforms are known today as platforms 1 and 8. Cubitt designed the station so that the space between these platforms contained an additional six platforms for storage and movement of locomotives and carriages. These were later adapted, between 1862 and 1893, to be used for arrivals and departures due to the increase in demand for transport. A small substation was later added to the west of the main train shed which contained two new platforms, these were used for the local line, today these are where platforms 9 -11 are located (Network Rail 2017).

The increase in commuter and visitor traffic resulted in a large number of kiosks and huts being constructed to cater for the publics need for refreshments and entertainment. These remained in existence until the 1970's when they were demolished make way for a ticket office, travel centre and a concourse (Network Rail 2017).

In 1863 the first Kings Cross Underground Station and Line were built. Later this station was added to with over ground platforms which eased congestion. Both under and over ground stations are connected to the main Kings Cross Station by underground tunnels (Network Rail 2017).

In 1923 Kings Cross came under the ownership of the London and North Eastern Railway (LNER) due to the Railways Act of 1921. The new company made improvements to the station amenities and to the Gas Works tunnels along with some signalling. Following the nationalisations of the Railways in 1948 Kings Cross came under the management of British Rails Eastern Region. This led to the re-numbering of the platforms, in 1972, which now totalled eleven. The track layout was simplified and electrified. Further additions to the station included a single-storey extension to accommodate the new Victoria Line, ticket hall and concourse which was constructed in 1972. This extension was originally designed to be a temporary structure and after 40 years it was finally demolished in late 2012. The extension area was replaced with Kings Cross Square.

King's Cross sustained no damage during World War One even though large amounts of high explosives were carried to the station in passenger trains. To reduce the potential of these trains being targeted by enemy aircraft they were hidden in tunnels. During World War Two King's Cross handled large numbers of troops along with civilian traffic. Engine shortages meant that up to 2,000 people had to be accommodated on each train. In the early hours of Sunday 11 May 1941, two 1,000 pounds (450 kg) bombs fell on the west side of the station, destroying the general offices, booking hall, a bar and blowing out a large section of roof. Twelve people were killed. The Station also did not escape damage during the Blitz, although the building got off lightly compared to the rest of London. The repaired damage or 'bomb gap' can still be seen on the western side of the station just south of the suburban train shed (John McAslan and Partners 2015).

In 1973 an IRA bomb was thrown and detonated within the main booking hall. The explosion caused damage to the buildings glass windows and injured at least five people (BBC 2018). The damage was repaired and cannot be seen today.

In 1987 a fire caused damage to the Piccadilly Unground Line exit on to Kings Cross Station and claimed 31 lives and caused injury to 100 people. This disaster hailed a period of upgrading and replacing of old or warn out machinery, which included many original features such as the wooden escalators. The fire lead to the introduction of the Fire Precaution (Sub-Surface Railway Stations) Regulations 1989 (London Fire Journal 2005).

In 1996 British Rail was privatised and remained Network Rail in 2002. As a result, Kings Cross was given a major 'clean up' as the area and building had developed a reputation as being run down and unsafe. This clean up took over a decade to complete (Simmons and Bibble 1997)

In 2005 it was announced that a £500 million-pound restoration and improvement plan had been commissioned by Network Rail. In 2007 work began to modernise, restore and expand Kings Cross Station with the introduction of the new Western Concourse, which opened in 2012. The new concourse was a major change for the station in terms of how it looks and how passengers move through the building. The concourse is now the main entrance way and egress from the station and came complete with a new ticket office with more counter space and an organised queuing system. The introduction of a separate self-service ticket machines has also improved the congested look often associated with ticket buying and collecting (Kessler 2012).

There are ticket barriers at the northern and southern ends of the concourse which can read up to three cards, oyster, bar code and magnetic strip. The northern barrier is for egress and entrance to platforms 9-11 while the southern is for entrance onto the platforms 0-8 only, platform 0 was added in 2010. This has allowed passengers to move quicker and more efficiently through the barriers and onto or off the platforms (Kessler 2012).

Before concourses and passage ways were seen as drab and dingy at Kings Cross but this new concourse is large, airy and brightly lit by natural and artificial light. The new concourse also allowed for eateries and retail outlets to once again to populate the Kings Cross Station area. This has allowed passengers to sit and relax and view the station from a ground and first floor level (Kessler 2012).

The modernisation allowed for 300 metres of new passageways, new underground ticket halls and escalators which have eased the flow of passenger traffic. The work also allowed for the unsympathetic 1970's extension to be demolished (Kings Cross 2018).

Assessment of Significance

Kings Cross has been described as being of national, regional and local significance (John McAslan and Partners 2015). Below is a discussion of the significance or interest of the building according to Historic England's Conservation Principles (2017):23rd April 2018

Historic Interest

Kings Cross Station was first and foremost a working railway station and it remains so today. It is also the earliest major station in London still intact (John McAslan and Partners 2015). The station was Grade I listed in June 1954, the highest grading of listed building in Britain, a building can only be Grade I listed if it is of '*exceptional interest'* (Historic England 2018)

The station has associations with various notable events and personalities such as:

The Flying Scotsman, also known as the Scotsman, is described as a 'national treasure' and the nations 'favourite locomotive' (LNER 2018). The Scotsman was built in Doncaster in 1923 and was the first steam engine locomotive of the newly formed London and North Eastern Railway (LNER). It was designed by Sir Nigel Gresley as part of the A1 class, the most powerful locomotives used by the LNER at that time. In 1934, the Scotsman was clocked at 100mph on a special test run, becoming officially the first locomotive in the Britain to have reached that speed. The train was retired in 1963 as it had been pulling carriages for 40 years and steam engines were becoming old-fashioned. After several decades of traveling around the world the Flying Scotsman was bought by the National Railway Museum in 2004. To raise funds the museum asked the public for donations which proved to be very successful, which reinforced the continual affection the public had for the train. The Scotsman is still in use today as a working museum piece and makes regular trips around the country. The Scotsman journeys often take it along its original route between Scotland and London, its final destination is Kings Cross. When it is known that the train is to arrive at Kings Cross many hundreds of people, many of which are loyal fans of the train, are known to congregate at the station or along the line (LNER 2018).

Kings Cross was also the final destination for the 'Mallard', another of Sir Nigel Gresley legendary steam train designs. The Mallard, built in 1938 was part of the A4 class of locomotive at the LNER, its innovative streamlined wedge-shaped, art deco design bore no resemblance to the preceding A3 class. The Mallard was built for speed and on the 3rd of July 1938 it reached the speed of 126 mph at the Rainhill Trails, a record which it still holds today. The end of the trails was Kings Cross where the train and its crew received a hero's welcome, the train however was a little worse for where after its record beating run (National Railway Museum 2018).

The station played an important strategic role during the two World Wars, either by conveying equipment and troops to the coast for action or by participating in the evacuation of children from London (John McAslan and Partners 2015).

The Royal family used King's Cross between 1861 and 1966, for travelling between London and Sandringham. Many historically famous figures and modern-day celebrities use Kings Cross as a final destination or a starting point for their journeys. Their arrivals and departures can often be seen in tabloids and magazines.

Today Kings Cross has taken on a different type of importance, familiarity, this has been classified at a national level of significance. The building is easily recognised and has been used in books, tv production and films (John McAslan and Partners 2015). Recently a film memorabilia attraction, from the Harry Potter franchise, has been placed within the station which has developed into a tourist attraction complete with professional photographer (Kings Cross 2018).

Many commuters and visitors to London and Britain may feel a sense of connection to Kings Cross as they either enter or depart from the station. This can lead to an emotional response, both positive and negative (John McAslan and Partners 2015).

Archaeological Interest

There is limited archaeological interest in Kings Cross Station as any below ground archaeological remains would have been severely impacted by the construction and subsequent modifications to the station. However, it is not entirely impossible that below archaeology remains do survive. There is a possibility that there may be Roman remains on site as some have been found in York Way, however, there is no evidence of a Roman settlement in the Kings Cross area. It is more likely that Medieval remains could be found as the hamlets of Battle Bridge and St Pancras are recorded on historical maps in the area (Camden Council 2004).

St Pancras was located around the remain of a 4th century pagan temple which was later converted to a Christian site. The site is believed to be one of the earliest Christian places in Britain and became a pilgrimage destination, later in the 12th century a church was built. Around this time a small settlement began to develop, the remains of which, or activities associated with the settlement, may survive under the station (Camden Council 2004).

Little is known of the settlement of Battle Bridge except that is was located at the point where the ancient highway of Maiden Lane (now York Way) crossed the River Fleet (Camden Council 2004).

To make way for the station several hospitals, a small pox and fever, had to be demolished. It is possible that there may be remains of the foundations of these building under Kings Cross (Camden Council 2004).

The building itself may contain archaeological interest as with the modifications of the station over time may have masked or covered the original or early phase of the platforms or station. Any work which requires the dismantling or demolition of parts of the structure may have to be monitored in case any early architectural evidence of the original building survive (Camden Council 2004).

Architectural and Artistic Interest

Lewis Cubitt, the architect of Kings Cross, is a renowned railway station designer who specialised in the Italianate style. He belonged to a family of carpenters, builders, engineers and architects, Lewis was the youngest brother of three all of whom at one time worked together in a family business. The business did not last long but the families still worked together as demonstrated by Lewis commissioning his nephew, Joseph, to construct Kings Cross Station (Ranmore War Memorial 2016).

The Italianate style that Cubitt idolised took its inspiration from the Regency and Renaissance period and from 16th century Italian architecture, particularly from rusticated villas. This style was traditionally used for domestic dwellings and not for larger public buildings such as Kings Cross (University of the West of England 2009).

Architecturally the station is of national importance and is a prime example of early innovative railway architecture (John McAslan and Partners 2015). The building dominants the area in terms of scale and use. The wide train shed roof span is an excellent example of technological skill and it '*reflects the power of the railway age*' (Camden Council 2004). Together with St Pancras Station and the Great Northern Hotel, also built by Lewis Cubitt, it forms one of the most important groups of railway buildings in Britain (Camden Council 2004).

In 2012 a new design element was added to the western side of Kings Cross; a large glass and steel concourse. The designers, John McAslan and Partners, strived to create something 'spectacular', which would blend well with the old station building and be modern in design. The concourse is described as being constructed in the geodetic style, referring to the science understanding three of Earth's fundamental properties, its geometric shape, its orientation in space, and its gravity field, as well as how they change over time (Kessell 2012). The 7,500sqm concourse has become Europe's largest single-span station structure and described as an '*architectural gateway'* into the Kings Cross multi use space (Frearson 2012).

The improvements to Kings Cross, which cost round £550 million, which included the new concourse allowed for some 1970's wiring to be removed, electrical and power equipment to be relocated underground and a general cleanup of the architecture. This resulted in some of the original features of Cubitts design to be re-established especially along the southern façade (Kessell 2012).

To assist with the power consumption of the station photovoltaic cells were added to the Middle of the train sheds barrels. This was a new innovative design which is aimed at making the station more sustainable for the future (Kessell 2012).

Conclusion

Kings Cross is of national, regional and local significance. It is Grade I listed and is described as of being of 'exceptional interest' by Historic England. The station is first and foremost a working railway station and is the earliest major station in London still intact.

The station developed from an underused parcel of land in London into the largest station in Britain. Originally built with two platforms, one for arrival and one for departures, and six platforms for the storage and movement of locomotives and carriages it soon extended and adapted its platforms to accommodate the increase in commuters and visitors to London. The station has attracted its fair share of disasters, some targeted such as the IRA bombing, and some accidental, such as the fire in 1987. Each has left a mark on the station either on the station buildings and within the memories those who use it.

In 2012 a major change occurred to the station with the introduction of a large and spectacular Western Concourse. This concourse is the new main light and airy entrance to the station and it has revolutionised how passengers arrive and disembark from the platforms. The new construction also reintroduced eateries and retail outlets which has allowed passengers to sit and relax and enjoy their experiences at the station. To improve on congestion new ticket desks and self-service machines were introduced which has helped to reduce the congested nature of ticket desks. The ticket barriers have also been designed to allow passengers to pass through in a quick and efficient manner. All of which has resulted in an improved flow and experience of visitors and reduced congestion at the station.

Kings Cross Station has historic, archaeological and architectural and artistic interest:

Historic Interest:

The station has had a long and varied history from its construction between 1849 to 1852 by the renowned Lewis Cubitt and his nephew Joseph Cubitt. Through the following decades the station has been connected with prominent events and activities such as the arrival or departure of the infamous locomotives of the London and North Eastern Railway, the Mallard and the Flying Scotsman. The station also played a prominent role during both World Wars either by transporting soldiers and equipment to the coast or by aiding in the evacuation of the children of London. This importance is continued today by the stations association with the Royal family or with celebrities all of which are published in tabloids or magazines.

In today's climate the historical interest of Kings Cross has expanded to include a new type if interest known as recognition. The station can readily be seen in books, TV productions and films. This has even led to a new tourist attraction being added to the station which has proved to be quite popular. On a personal level those who use the station can have an emotional connection to the building as they depart on holidays, say good bye to loved ones or pass through on their through.

Archaeological Interest:

Although there is a limited potential for archaeological remains on the site of Kings Cross the surrounding area does contain Roman, Medieval and Post Medieval remains. The building itself may contain archaeological interest as with the modifications of the station over time may have masked or covered the original or early phase of the platforms or station.

Architectural and Artistic Interest:

Kings Cross was designed and constructed in the Italianate style that Cubitt idolised, he took his inspiration from the Regency and Renaissance period and from 16th century Italian architecture. This style was traditionally used for domestic dwellings and it is unusual that such a design would have been used on a large public building. From the architecture point of view the station is of national importance and is a prime example of early innovative railway design. The new Western Concourse is in its own right an architectural and artistic marvel. It was designed to be 'spectacular' and would blend with the older parts of the station whilst at the same time being modern and innovative.

This significance and interest can be preserved within the current redevelopment of the station by understanding the importance of the original historical fabric of the building. Identifying and preserving the building as an important and recognisable structure to the current population and allowing the building to grow without impacting on its significant characteristics.

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