

Press Release – 6 pages

ReardonSmith Architects Complete Another Iconic Hotel Refurbishment in London

(London – 21 July, 2015) ReardonSmith, the internationally renowned hotel architectural practice, has completed its three and a half year project at The Lanesborough, the first total renovation of the unique and supremely luxurious hotel since the Regency period building became a hotel 25 years ago. The architects worked in close collaboration with interior designers, Alberto Pinto agency, as well as with teams of specialist craftspeople and engineering consultants to re-create an extraordinary hotel. The Lanesborough is now as distinctive in style as it is testimony to the supreme quality of English master craftsmanship, while its new services infrastructure and re-planned back-of-house areas are set to take operations to a new level in a hotel already legendary for its service. The Lanesborough is now part of the Oetker Collection of elite luxury hotels.



With the objective of re-affirming the position of The Lanesborough amongst the highest echelons of grand hotels, the design team's first task was to review the property room-by-room in conjunction with the hotel operator and prepare a detailed plan of what should be rebuilt, restored, refurbished or

replaced. The brief to the interior designers was to create interiors that were aligned with the Regency origins of the building, adding modern and historical twists to provide an appropriately unique layering of styles, reflecting the graceful maturing of a functioning historic establishment. The building is Grade II* listed and ReardonSmith was responsible for negotiating all planning and listed building consents and for maintaining close dialogue with English Heritage and Westminster Conservation officers throughout the project.

“We were very conscious of The Lanesborough’s exceptional pedigree and worldwide reputation in every decision we took and each line that we drew,” says Conrad Smith, Managing Director of ReardonSmith Architects. “The implementation on-site of Alberto Pinto’s exquisite new interior design has truly been of the highest quality and the synergy of traditional craftsmanship and modern engineering has ensured that the hotel’s unique place amongst London’s luxury hotels is certain for years to come.”

The existing layout of the building has remained largely untouched. However, minor changes were made to support the operational requirements of the hotel. These included the introduction of a pantry adjacent to the Withdrawing Room principally to serve afternoon tea, the reconfiguration of the business centre and store rooms to create a boardroom, the relocation of the concierge desk and a new cloakroom within the entrance lobby. Adjustments were also made to the back-of-house areas to more efficiently utilise the space and achieve an attractive and comfortable staff dining room.

Ceilings have been replaced throughout the public areas with highly decorative fibrous plaster crafted by Locker & Riley to the design of Alberto Pinto, each room receiving its own unique design. Central to ReardonSmith’s plan was the absolute concealment of all A/C grills and access panels, either hidden within the all-new wall and ceiling mouldings or behind resin panels designed to perfectly replicate the mouldings.



The Portuguese marble to the entrance lobby has been refurbished and, with rigorous attention to matching, extended throughout the public circulation areas. The Royal Entrance has been transformed with elaborate trompe l'oeil painted walls and ceiling by specialist decorative company, Angel Interiors, who transformed some 1,100 sq metres of wall using a faux stone blocking technique to achieve the illusion of a fabulous tented room. The stone panels on the walls have been revived and mirrors are now inset into the arched niches; elsewhere, new faux stone, also by Angel Interiors, perfectly replicates the genuine stone walls. Throughout, the previously dark mahogany panelling has been stripped back and re-polished to reveal its original warm tone, further refined in the Library Bar with the introduction of exquisite hand-painted decorative panels. Delicate marquetry panelling has been introduced to line the walls of the St. Georges Room, while The Belgravia Room has been opened up into a single and quite astonishing function room. This is now resplendent with 22 antiqued Venetian-style low iron glass pilasters, bevelled and hand-engraved glass pelmets to the windows and A/C cabinets in antique silvered mirror, all crafted by the Lancashire-based Daedalian Glass Studio.



Céleste restaurant (previously Apsley's), has also been fully refitted to reflect the Regency-inspired design brief with new hand-modelled frieze panels to match the new fibrous plaster ceilings. At the entrance to the restaurant, a bespoke wine store has been created composed of sandblasted low iron glass panels, a technique also applied to the ornate restaurant seating screens, both created by Daedalian to a design by Alberto Pinto.

A meticulous survey of the 94 guestrooms identified 12 broad groups of bedrooms in terms of size and distinguishing features, although the reality of the various configurations within each group meant that no room was exactly the same as another. Every guestroom has been treated to a new all-marble bathroom. Each marble block was individually chosen and it was ReardonSmith's task to ensure that each slab was set out for perfect book-matching. Dolby & Taylor were amongst the artisans working on the guestrooms, creating exquisite hand-painted stencilling in a number of the rooms.

"Working at The Lanesborough has been incredibly rewarding and challenging all at the same time," says Tim Dolby, Creative Director of Dolby & Taylor. "Naturally, we used our very best craftspeople but what is also marvellous is that a project of this kind allows us to give a remarkable experience to the next generation of artisans, helping to keep the skills alive."

The Lanesborough Suite on the first floor has been retained and the Royal Suite on the second floor has been extended and refurbished to elevate it to be once again the pre-eminent suite within the hotel, complete with separate purlieu for husband and wife, each with a truly majestic bedroom and bathroom. The suite can be opened up into adjoining rooms achieving a 250 sq metre residence that extends along the total length of the façade and comprises four living rooms and seven bedrooms and bathrooms. Both suites command magnificent views over Hyde Park Corner and Green Park. In

addition, the number of inter-connecting rooms throughout the guest floors has been increased to provide a variety of accommodation options.



The absolute insistence on concealing the ‘behind-the-scenes’ from guests continues across the bedroom floors. The access panel in the bathrooms, for example, has been skilfully hidden behind the book-matched marble clad door on which the heated towel rail is mounted. Guest floor corridor ceilings were all replaced to permit an entirely new services infrastructure for the rooms.

Images



Additional images showing artisanal details from the interiors may be available on request.

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Editors Notes

About ReardonSmith

ReardonSmith Architects is an award-winning global leader in hotel and resort design. The practice has an unrivalled track record in the restoration and rebuilding of luxury hotels in London, an enviable reputation for the design of new destinations in Europe and the widest experience of hotel architecture across the entire spectrum of new- build and existing estates. The company's achievement stems from a profound understanding of hotels – as an asset, an operation and as a guest experience.

Based near London Bridge, ReardonSmith comprises both architecture and landscape design teams and employs some 50 architects and technicians. It is led by its founding partners as well as by a senior team of talented individuals, all of whom have distinguished careers in hotel design. In London, current and recent projects include: The Beaumont, The Savoy, Four Seasons Park Lane, InterContinental Park Lane, 50 St James's, The Cavendish Hotel and several boutique hotel and residential projects for Cadogan Estates, as well as The Lanesborough. Overseas projects include: a total of six new hotels in Azerbaijan amongst which are the Four Seasons hotel and JW Marriott Absheron in Baku; master planning and subsequent phases of the new marina destination, Porto Montenegro, including the new Regent Hotel & Residences; Hyatt Regency Tbilisi and a new luxury hotel for Astana, capital of Kazakhstan.

For more information, please visit: www.reardonsmith.com

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