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CHURCH ROW AND PERRINS WALK NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM AREA APPLICATION

Introduction

1. This is an application to define the area and boundary for the “Church Row and Perrins Walk Neighbourhood Forum”.
2. The organisation making this application is the proposed “Church Row and Perrins Walk Neighbourhood Forum” which is a relevant body capable of being designated a Neighbourhood Forum in accordance with section 61G of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.
3. The “Church Row and Perrins Walk Neighbourhood Forum” is capable of being a qualifying body for the purposes of the Localism Act 2011 and is proposing this area application alongside an application for it to be so recognised.

Forum Area

4. The proposed “Area”, shown in the attached map, comprises the streets of Church Row and Perrins Walk (formerly Church Row Mews). The Area includes St John’s Church and the associated Churchyards either side of Church Row. The Area is predominantly residential, but includes a church, a nursery school, a physiotherapist practice, a rare textile business, a sculptor of ceramics, a design studio, an estate agent, and a restaurant.
5. Church Row is a street almost entirely lined with early 18th century houses of brown brick with red dressings. Many have cast iron railings, and arched cellars that run under most of the road. The graveyard set in a mature landscape provides a backdrop to the Church. There are clear views of the rear elevations of the south side from the lane leading to Frognaal Way. Gardnor Mansions, built in 1898, have a different style and scale, more similar to the north side of Heath Street.

7. Set in a Conservation Area, Church Row is a key feature of many Hampstead walking tours. The twin lines of terraced houses form one of the most complete Georgian streets in London, with much original detail. Most of the buildings are Grade II or II*. St Johns Church looks across to Hampstead Tower, and the views of Church Row and the graveyards (painted by Constable) are listed in Camden's conservation statement.
8. The site of St John's Church has a very long history. It has been a site of worship for over 1,000 years. The Churchyards contain many monuments and gravestones of historic interest some of which date back to before 1560. The Church, rebuilt in 1747, is listed grade I, and the graveyards contain a further twenty separate listings. The gravestones provide a wealth of social history and architectural interest. Of concern is that a number of graves appear to be falling into disrepair, and many in the southern section have become overgrown with brambles.
9. The Area has been "home" to many famous people. Here are just a few:
 - John Constable (1776-1837) lived and painted in Hampstead and is buried in the Southern Churchyard;
 - Rt Hon. Hugh Gaitskell (1906-1963) was the leader of the Labour party 1955-1963 lived in Frognaal Gardens and is buried in the North Churchyard;
 - George Du Maurier(1834-1896) the author lived at 27 Church Row, and is buried in the North Churchyard;
 - The author HG Wells lived with his family at Number 17;
 - Peter Cook (1937-1995) the comedian lived at 17 Church Row; and
 - Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965) author of poetry and children's stories lived at 20 Perrins Walk. Her hymn "Morning has broken" was popularised by Cat Stevens.
10. The Churchyards' graves and monuments are sheltered by sycamores, horse-chestnuts, cypress, cedar-of-Lebanon, maidenhair tree, and oaks. Between the graves are grasses (rye-grass, sheep's-sorrel, hairy sedge, and field wood-rush) and unusually (for London) four types of ferns (lady's-fern, male-fern, broad buckler fern and hart's-tongue). In total there are more than one hundred different plant species, two of which are uncommon to London: a type of primrose (*Primula vulgaris*) and a fern (*Anthyrium filix-femina*). As a result of this diversity, the site is designated a "Borough Grade I Site of Importance for Nature Conservation" by Camden and the London Ecology Unit.

Local Support and Boundary Negotiations

11. Over the last six months the vast majority of the one hundred (100) residents and workers in the Area have been canvassed on the proposed Forum. 87 have been contacted, and individual meetings to discuss and consult on local issues have been held with 60 (i.e. 87% and 60% of the Area population). The formation of the proposed forum is supported by 57 founder members comprising 51 residents and 5 workers.
12. Twenty-six residents of Church Row and Perrins Walk, and Camden Councillor Gio Spinella held an inaugural meeting of the Forum on the 9th of January 2014.
13. The Forum has strong local support that is representative, inclusive and reflective of the Area.
14. The boundaries have been discussed and agreed with the proposed Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum and the adjacent street association for Frognaal Way.

15. Conversations and meetings have also been held with other local residents association including: Arkwright Road Residents Association; The Netherhall Neighbourhood Association; and the Redington Frognaal Association, some of which are looking to also create local neighbourhood forums.

Conclusion

16. The Area is considered appropriate because it is an identifiable area, with many and varied features that make it unique to London, and a clearly defined community that provides strong local support.

17. The residents of Church Row, Perrins Walk and the Church Row Association (founded 1973), all support the creation of the Church Row and Perrins Walk Neighbourhood Forum.

18. It is requested that Camden Council approves the Area of the Church Row and Perrins Walk Neighbourhood Forum.

Yours sincerely

David Milne