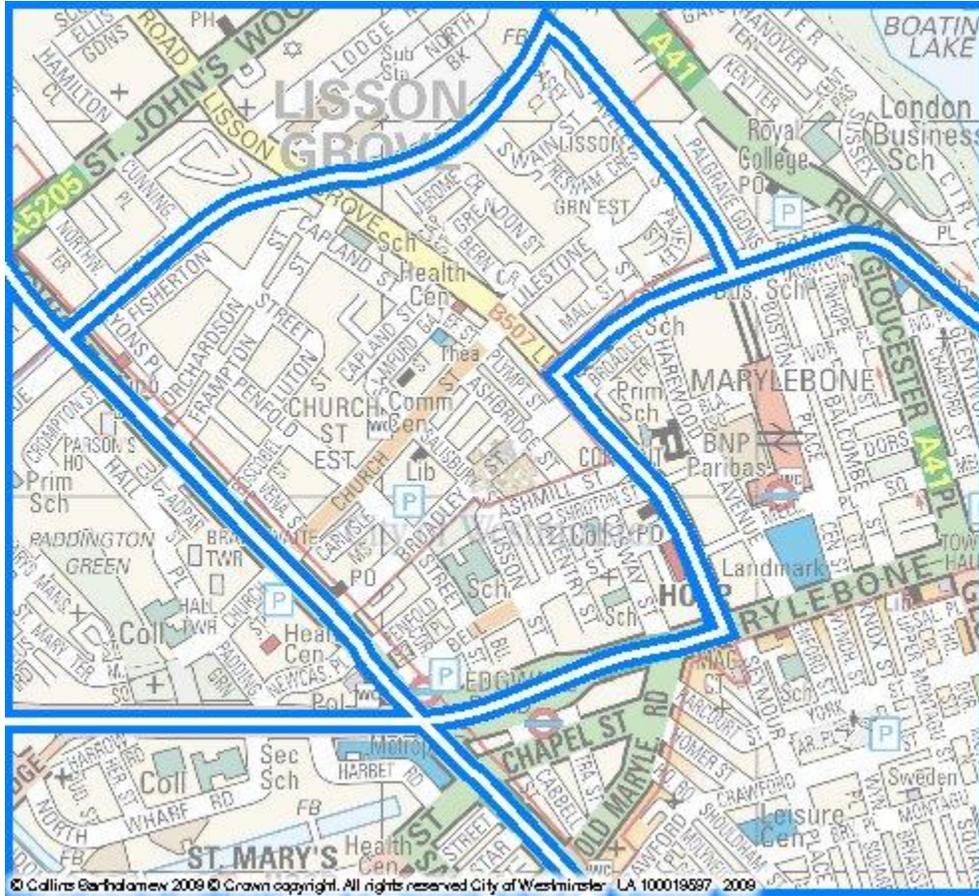


CHURCH STREET NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA APPLICATION

PROPOSED NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA MAP



STATEMENT OF APPROPRIATENESS OF AREA

The neighbourhood area proposed is that covered by the electoral ward of Church Street. The boundary is well defined – Edgware Road in the west, Aberdeen Place and Regent's Canal in the north, the Chiltern Railway line to Rossmore Road in the east, then west along Rossmore Road, south along Lisson Grove to Marylebone Road, which represents the southern boundary. The Church Street Market is a prominent feature at the centre of the ward.

The area is quite distinct from the rest of Marylebone. The ward is widely used as a unit for demographics and other statistics and these show it has one of the most deprived populations in the country, all four Church St Super Output Areas being among the top 5% most deprived areas in England. Recent figures suggest it has the lowest life expectancy in Westminster. Also noteworthy are the significantly low levels of adult numeracy and literacy and the subsequent detrimental effect this has on peoples' economic prospects.

The ward is ethnically mixed with high Arabic-speaking and Bengali populations. The 2009 census of pupils' home languages showed 27% Arabic, 22% Sylheti and only 19% English.

It has a high proportion of social housing. Some 3,500 properties are managed by CityWest Homes (CWH) and other Registered Social Landlords. Leaseholders account for just over a quarter of CWH's stocks, one of the lowest leaseholder rates in Westminster. There are over 150 overcrowded households in CWH's stock alone.

The issues that the area faces are quite different from those elsewhere in Marylebone with poverty and housing the most pressing and a major neighbourhood renewal plan in place.

APPLICANT ORGANISATION

The Church Street Neighbourhood Forum was created in 1998 and through its constitution comprises all residents' groups, community groups and business groups in the Church Street Ward. Its membership is hugely in excess of the statutory requirement of 21. It has been active since its inception, sponsoring community festivals, encouraging communities to work together and developing a Community Plan 2002-2004. This led to a successful Neighbourhood Management Programme from 2005-2011 and paved the way for the current Futures Project concerned with neighbourhood renewal on a larger scale than anywhere in Westminster.

The Neighbourhood Forum has spawned the Future Steering Group to oversee the major renewal and regeneration taking place in the ward and to be the means of liaison in the Council. This also includes residents, and representatives of businesses and community groups. In turn it has created several working groups concerned with particular sites or aspects of regeneration, such as employment and skills. In total some 70 Church Street individuals or organisations are active in the Working Groups.

The Neighbourhood Forum also has a Planning and Licensing Group composed of local residents. This considers planning and licensing applications in and affecting the Ward and makes representations either directly to the Council or through the St Marylebone Society which to date has been the organisation designated by the Council as the body covering our area for consultative purposes.

As can be seen the Neighbourhood Forum is representative of a unique and vibrant area. It is also an excellent example of localism - the local community coming together to work for a better future.