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Church Row and Perrins Walk Neighbourhood Forum
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Dear Mr Stroud

Re Planning Application 2016/5715/L - 28 Church Row, London NW3

I am writing on behalf of the Neighbourhood Forum to provide feedback on the above application.

28 Church Row is part of one of London's finest Georgian Terraces and attracts many tours. The house was built by Hughes between 1707 and 1713 (so it's actually Queen Anne) as a speculation stimulated by the success of Well Walk. Famous residents include Wilkie Collins¹ and George Du Maurier². The building is listed "two star", with the cast iron railings getting specific mention.

The building was constructed out of bricks made from local clay dug from what is now called Church Row. The street would as a result have been lowered, and the cellars, which extend under the pavement and the road, would have been created both for storage and to reinstate the street level. Two of the cellars show signs of being used to store coal, but are currently empty due to the damp. The coal hole covers form part of a noteworthy collection that run throughout Church Row's pavements.



The application describes the cellars usage as "sui generis" or without a defined use, and no explanation is given for the future use of the cellar. The central cellar was used as a bar for the restaurant that was called "Le Cellier du Midi" and appears to have been recently converted by the current owners into a seating area for the current tapas bar. The tapas bar has a restaurant license that stipulates that any drinking must be subservient to eating, and so the use class is almost certainly "A3 - Restaurant and cafés".

Proposed Works to The Cellar

The drawings assume the cellars will have footings, but experience from other buildings in the row indicates that there will be none. The drawings show a new insulated floor slab, which presumably involves removing existing fabric before digging down to a level well below any foundations. As the tanking system is reversible, it is not objectionable

¹ Wilkie Collins (1824-1889) was an English novelist, playwright, and short story writer. His best-known works are *The Woman in White*, *No Name*, *Armada* and *The Moonstone*. The last is considered the first modern English detective novel.

² George du Maurier (1834-1896) was a cartoonist and author, known for his cartoons in *Punch* and for his novel *Trilby*.

that the original brickwork will not be visible, but greater thought needs to be given to the cellar foundations and the works engineering. This issue is not just a listed building matter, but a general planning matter with public interest as the cellars constitute a public space that extends under a busy road used by pedestrians, cyclists, cars and HGVs (that weigh up to 27 tonnes³ and more).

Brick Work Pointing

The brickwork in the cellars needs to be carefully examined and where necessary repointed (see photos above and below).



Coal Hole Covers

Something will need to be done to the coal shoots as, if left as is, they are likely to cause an issue with the support of the tanking membrane.

As the coal hole covers are a visible and integral part of the listed building they should be retained.

Hand Rail

The current rope handrail is not original and is neither of good design nor is it consistent with local materials. There are no objections to the handrail being replaced, but it should be replaced with a cast iron balustrade rather than one made of wood. In addition to being much more durable, such a balustrade will be in keeping with the railings of 28 Church Row, and the bulk of the street's other listed railings.

Conclusion

Whilst the overall proposal is not objectionable and the issues are capable of being resolved, it is currently incomplete. Once resolved, it should be re-consulted on.

Yours sincerely



David Milne

³ Whilst there is a tonnage restriction of 7.5 Tonnes there is a "for access exemption" that is used by rubbish collection HGVs on a regular basis. Once laden they can weigh 27 Tonnes or more.