Dear Sir or Madam,

We are the elected councillors representing Queen’s Gate ward as currently constituted. Two of us live in Queen’s Gate ward and the other close by. Between us we have approximately 35 years of service to the ward.

We note that the Commission proposes a change to the boundary between Queen’s Gate ward and Abingdon ward (as currently constituted) to achieve in Abingdon ward a warding pattern that will deliver good levels of electoral equality in the future.

We welcome that change: the adjustment also delivers a clearer and better understood boundary between the two wards.

The Commission has also considered whether the museums and streets north of Cromwell Gardens should form part of its proposed three-member Hans Town ward or its proposed three-member Queen’s Gate ward and has recommended that the area in question be included in Queen’s Gate ward. We note that the Commission would particularly welcome views on that proposal.

We welcome and support the inclusion of the museums and the streets north of Cromwell Gardens in the new three-member Queen’s Gate ward and note that it will deliver a very high level of electoral equality for voters.

The boundary between the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the City of Westminster in the Knightsbridge area follows mediaeval parish boundaries that now have little significance. One consequence is that the City of Westminster ward covering this area (Knightsbridge and Belgravia ward) snakes around from Lowndes Square to Exhibition Road uniting disparate communities over a narrow tether of occupied land.

The counter-part in the Royal Borough is a tongue of land stretching from Queen’s Gate (the street of that name) along the north side of Brompton Road/Cromwell Gardens (A4) that has some characteristics in common with the land on the other side of the A4 but also many distinguishing features.

It consist of four main blocks: (a) the Natural History Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum, (b) two substantial religious buildings and ancillary accommodation (with some news
property behind); (c) a distinguished residential square; (d) some smaller mews-like dwellings at
the apex of the triangle.

The Natural History Museum, the V&A and the great churches have no parallel on the south
side of the A4. With the exception of Brompton Square, the residential dwellings north of the
A4 are very different in character from the predominantly red-brick mansion blocks and
Italianate stucco houses that characterise the area near Harrods and back behind the Brompton
Road/Cromwell Gardens to Queen’s Gate (the street).

In terms of built form, therefore, there is little that can be said against separating these dwellings
along the line of the A4, a significant man-made boundary. It might be argued that residents on
one side of the A4 share considerable levels of experience and concern with their neighbours to
the other side of the road, but elsewhere in the Royal Borough, the Commission has consistently
treated main roads as suitable boundaries between wards and there is no exceptional case here
for departing from that norm.

In fact, there are quite good arguments for bringing this block of land into closer union with the
existing Queen’s Gate ward. The basis is the Great Exhibition of 1851 which left as a legacy a
vision, largely implemented, of a planned mixed quarter of museums, educational institutions and
residential property. The residential properties in the eastern part of Queen’s Gate ward (as
currently constituted) are as much a part of the vision for the Great Exhibition’s legacy as are the
V&A and Natural History Museum and the religious buildings to the east of the V&A have a
similar character. The same claim cannot easily be made of Brompton Square and the small
mews-like streets in the vicinity, admittedly, but their residential character does not sit ill with the
predominantly residential Queen’s Gate ward.

On balance therefore, we consider that the Commission’s recommendations achieve in this
respect a high level of electoral equality for voters in a way that can be argued best to reflect local
community interests and identities, while taking account of the boundaries formed by major
roads in a way that is consistent with the approach the Commission has adopted elsewhere in the
Royal Borough; consequently we support the recommendations.

Yours faithfully,

Cllr. Daniel Moylan
Cllr. Fiona Buxton
Cllr. Sam Mackover

RECEIVED
18 APR 2013