

OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER 2022/3578/P

1) TfL's proposal to the council and the general public is misleading.

TfL's proposal state that "The arches and surrounding spaces have been identified by TfL as long overdue renovation and repair, with some currently considered to be unlettable. Additionally, the site as a whole requires a fundamental upgrade to drainage, water and power provision, together with modifications to the fabric to meet current fire and energy efficiency legislation. There are also a number of unsanctioned and non-compliant additions that have been built up over the years that need to be removed.

In addition to condition there are a number of existing issues on site including anti-social behaviour; and poor access."

However, there are already several successful businesses currently operating at Kilburn Mews and we know they are exactly what the local community want, as they have all been here for at least 10 years and struggled through COVID-19. Some have been here for 18 years and one for over 35 years. They include photographers Marcelo Benfield and Paul Weaver, artist Kalliopi Lemos, bespoke furniture maker John Nixon of Kraftwork and motorbike repairs Southern Cross. Each business has provided a business summary at the end of this document giving their reasons as to why they should not be evicted. All these businesses provide services for the local community and surrounding areas. For example, Kalliopi Lemos has invested a substantial amount of money on the refurbishment of her arch, Marcelo Benfield's photography business has been operating there for more than 35 years. Paul Weaver has been working as a photographer with Marcelo for 18 years, serving the community. They have 5-star reviews across the board and run a very successful local photographic business. Access is very good with a wide gate allowing access to vehicles, something that TfL is planning to restrict/eliminate altogether.

TfL's proposal also states "the redevelopment is needed as many arches are currently unsafe and do not meet modern requirements. And that this redevelopment will allow it to thrive". This is not so, as it assumes that redevelopment is needed for the arches to be safe and create a thriving environment. However, we believe the arches are in fact very lettable. Proof of this is that TfL has very recently granted access to a few previously unoccupied arches which were deemed by them "unlettable". To add injury to insult, these were granted rent free.

The arches are at this time occupied by the following businesses:

- Photographic studios (4 arches)
- Motorcycle repair garage (2 arches)
- Bespoke furniture workshop (2 arches)
- Artist Kalliopi Lemos (1 arch)
- Marketing company (1 arch)
- KSOM - Kilburn State Of Mind Charity (1 arch)
- Other artists (1 arch)

In total: Only 2.5 arches out of the 13 are currently vacant (please see figure 1)

Unit	Existing Use (GF/FF)	Proposed Use
Arch 9a	Vacant	Use Class E
Arch 10a	Vacant	Use Class E
Arch 11a	Metal workshop	Use Class E
Arch 12a	Vacant	Use Class E
Arch 13a	Vehicle repair	Use Class E
Arch 14a	Vacant	Use Class E
Arch 15a	WCs	Use Class E
Arch 11	Vacant	Use Class E
Arch 12	Vacant	Use Class E
Arch 13	Vacant/Photography Studio	Use Class E
Arch 14	Vacant/Photography Studio	Use Class E
Arch 15	Vacant/Photography Studio	Use Class E
Arch 17	Vacant	Plant
364 KHR	Convenience Store	Removed
366 KHR	Restaurant	Use Class E
2c Maygrove	Vacant	Plant/refuse
Cottage	Vacant	Removed

Unit	Existing use as of 23/09/22
Arch 9A	Vacant
Arch 10A	Vacant
Arch 11A	Artist Kalliopi Lemos
Arch 12A	KSOM - Kilburn State Of Mind Charity
Arch 13A	Southern Cross Motorcycle Repair
Arch 14A	Marketing Company
Arch 11	Various Artists
Arch 12	Unknown occupier
Arch 13	Krafwork Bespoke Furniture Maker
Arch 14	Krafwork/Photographic Studio 1st Floor
Arch 15	Vacant/Photographic Studio 1st Floor
Arch 16	Photographic Studio 1st Floor
Arch 17	Photographic Studio 1st Floor

Figure 1

Regarding “thriving”, we believe that after the development is concluded, rents will increase dramatically and local businesses will not be able to afford them, especially during the current financial situation. The arches that are in a state of disrepair could quite easily be refurbished and then rented out. We have noticed that throughout many years, some of the arches remained neglected, which is why they require some attention now.

We don't know the reason why these arches have not been refurbished earlier and rented out to local businesses. They have been empty and not been advertised for years, although we have been asked by potential business owners about their availability many times. This seems like an inexplicable loss of revenue for TfL given the current cost of living crisis and the financial situation TfL is going through, as seen in the news.

For instance, the yard downstairs from our premises was used as a garage, car dealers, car wash, etc. After the last tenant vacated three years ago, the yard was left in relatively good condition. However, for some reason, it has never been rented out again, despite many enquiries, which we duly passed on to TfL.

Of course, the decision to repair or leave empty, unused and decaying is the prerogative of the owners, but it seems strange that a body such as TfL, which is connected to the Mayor and consistently needs government funding would choose this path. Until recently there were over 10 units which have been left empty for many years and all this happened before the pandemic; not because of the pandemic.

TfL's proposal also states “[that it would be good for local businesses and the community](#)”. Again, we believe that after the development is concluded, rents will increase dramatically, which local businesses will not be able to afford, especially during the current financial crisis we are now facing. Surely it would be preferable for the community to rent out the arches at the current state at more reasonable and affordable rates, especially due to the lack of similar spaces in the area.

TfL's proposal states that “[the redevelopment will stop antisocial behaviour around the arches](#)”. This is greatly exaggerated. In all our 35 years of occupying the premises, we have only seen antisocial behaviour during the pandemic when people weren't working. This only lasted for a few months. At all other times, we have not seen any antisocial behaviour around the arches whatsoever.

2) Current businesses are not being looked after adequately.

We are very concerned about how this new development will affect our business, as none of us want to leave and we are being forcibly evicted.

We have spent many years building our client base in the local area and supporting the local community with our work. We have hundreds of clients from Kilburn and North West London who would not be prepared to travel further if we were asked to vacate our studios.

We put to TfL that we would want LIKE for LIKE (in area) at a similar rent to our existing lease rather than compensation. It is worth noting that Marcelo Benfield has an active five-year lease which he signed on 1st October 2020, with over three years yet to run. Other tenants are in a similar situation.

We would be more than happy to accept similar size premises in a nearby location so we can keep our businesses local.

We have been told we can continue to be TfL's customers but when we asked about other premises we were informed that no arches were available in Kilburn and that we would need to look ourselves outside the area and at market value rates which are two to three times what we are paying now.

TfL has refused to consider us paying similar rates as in our current lease for arches elsewhere. The proposal states that we will be helped and compensation offered. However, this compensation is not enough to cover even one year's rent at current market value elsewhere.

We find it hard to understand why a scheme for the Mayor of London to help a small business out of the pandemic would willingly evict the same small businesses which are still struggling in a pandemic. We have bounce back loans and overdrafts still to pay off with young families and Marcelo Benfield has stage 4 cancer and has been struggling to carry on with the business with his condition, but now this added stress of eviction is having its effect on him. We had believed we had at least five years with the new lease to help restart our business and pay off our pandemic debts and did not expect leases to be broken halfway through.

It is also difficult for us to understand why TfL is making this proposal and investing £200 million in this development when it is common knowledge that they are in a financially difficult situation (including current strikes). TfL is being bailed out by the Government, considering the poor current state of its transport infrastructure.

Side note:

It's worth noting that there was a development in Peckham and to keep the local businesses active, Southwark Council helped build this area for them.

Link: <https://peckhampalms.com/>

OUR BUSINESSES' STATEMENTS

GREGORY PISHCHUGIN - OWNER (SOUTHERN CROSS MOTORCYCLES):

There are some thoughts on why Southern Cross motorcycles should stay in Arch 13, rear of 2 Maygrove Rd:

1. This arch established the business more than 20 years ago.
 2. I can not understand why a coffee shop or any other business should be there instead of us. We have been paying the rent for over 20 years, having locals customer fixing their bikes.
 3. If TfL wants to make a renovation they can carry it out without forcing the existing customers to leave the properties. There are plenty of empty arches which should have been renovated and rented out ages ago.
 4. TfL will spend the government's money but a profit from each arch will be 500 pounds more than the existing rent payment. That is nonsense from the economic perspective.
 5. There are no facilities in most arches, and that will cost a fortune to rebuild them for TfL.
 6. We will close the business if we have to vacate the property.
 7. We spent huge resources to renovate our existing arch, to make it as nice as it is now - without leaking water, with painting walls, etc.
- Why would somebody else be there instead of us?.

MARCELO BENFIELD - PHOTOGRAPHER (STUDIOFORMAS)

I have been at the arches for over 35 years as part of a group of fashion photographers. I have a five-year lease that will expire in October 2025 and comprises arches 14/15/16 & 17. We carried out extensive improvements/redecoration to the arches at our expense, such as lining the walls with polished wood and building a "photographic infinite cove" in one of the studios. All in the hope of a long term occupancy.

My health concerns:

I have stage 4 (terminal) cancer. Even the thought of having to vacate my studio is causing me a lot of stress already. Looking for an alternative location and finding one (highly unlikely to be like-for-like and in this area), will surely have an adverse effect on my condition. I am very worried. My cancer just came back and I have restarted chemotherapy treatment in early September 2022. Adding stress on top of it is not good for my health...

I, together with Paul Weaver have an extensive local client list that we have built over the years. If we have to move out of the area, we will lose many of them.

[TfL's proposal aims to create a community-driven social hub, open up vacant and abandoned arches and use existing commercial buildings for community uses.](#)

TfL's Jo Fisher's quote:

["We are delighted to have had our arches at the north end of Kilburn High Street selected, in the Mayor's High Streets for All challenge.](#)

["We're looking forward to working with the local community and hope that we can bring a new kind of resilience and energy to this end of Kilburn High Street, creating a welcoming gateway from our station. "This work is part of our wider investment into providing new spaces and opportunities for our tenants - many of which are small businesses - across London's diverse communities."](#)

However, I believe the arches are in fact very lettable. Proof of this is that TfL has very recently granted access to a few previously unoccupied arches which were deemed "unlettable". To add injury to insult, these were granted rent free. Please see figure 1.

Most of the arches are currently occupied and TfL has in the past rejected offers to rent out some of those left vacant to existing businesses that required expansion (P&O Motors for example). There are many existing small businesses which are doing very well. TfL intends to sacrifice these small businesses (which are all existing tenants), to help out new potential businesses. It seems like this a contradiction in terms to me and I believe it is morally wrong...

Compensation offered by TfL would not cover even one year's rent at current market value elsewhere. I would like at least enough compensation to afford three years' rates at market value, which is the number of years left on my existing lease.

Our arches 14/15/16 & 17 currently occupy a total area of about 213.64m² /2,300 SqFt. Please see figure 2.

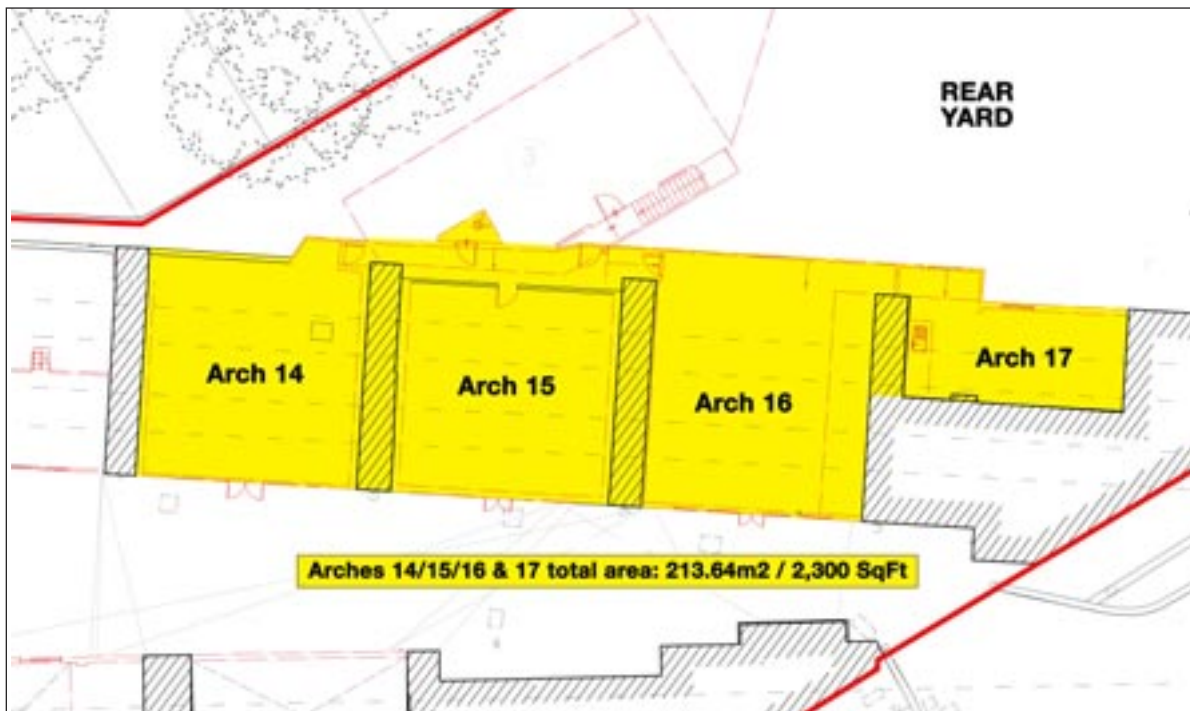


Figure 2

PAUL WEAVER - PHOTOGRAPHER (IMAGO2 PHOTOGRAPHY)

For the last 20 years, I have been running a photography business serving the community and my colleague Marcelo has been there for more than 35 years. If you look at my clients and reviews you will see they are all very happy clients I have 5-star reviews across the board and run a very successful local business, only the pandemic was an issue as otherwise my last 20 years have been regularly successful and profitable and a benefit to all the local small businesses in the north London area.

I have spent over 20 years building clients in the local area and supporting the local businesses with my work. I have over 500 clients from Kilburn and northwest London who would not travel further if I was forced to move. I assume the other businesses at the Mews are in a similar position.

I have spent many thousands of pounds and so much time building up my website and SEO and local contacts based in this area. I also live 5 minutes walk away and have lived in Brent for over 12 years and bought the flat to be close to the studio. Other businesses in the arches have had extensive costs developing their arches.

I have loans (government bounce back loan) and overdrafts still to pay off from the pandemic with a young family: a girl of three and a baby boy who is eight months old. My wife also has had mental health issues for the last 10 years so relies on my support. My colleague Marcelo has terminal cancer and has been struggling to carry on the business with his condition but now this added stress of eviction is having its effect on him. We had believed we had 5 years with the new lease signed just 8 months ago, and I had planned over this time to pay off the pandemic debt. To evict us will mean I will have to restart the business in a new area, whilst losing most of my regular clients and business, whilst still in huge debt from the pandemic.

We have been told we will be entitled to compensation but we do not want to move, and if forced to we would want LIKE for LIKE rather than compensation which we think is fair. The same size studios, in a nearby location so we keep our local business, and at the same rent, we signed in the lease in October 2020. We can't understand how a government-linked agency such as TfL can break a five-year lease after just one year of signing. It seems unfair and immoral to put our business and families at risk and out of business while the pandemic and its effects are not quite over yet.

TIM PEACOCK - STUDIO MANAGER (ARTIST KALLIOPI LEMOS)

We went to great lengths approximately 14 years ago to find a sculpture studio that would meet the various needs of an international artist working on large scale projects and (after an extensive search) found 11a, The Arches.

The ceiling height, large doors and access to Maygrove road were all important attributes, as too was the proximity to Kalliopi's home in Hampstead. Just a 5 minute drive away.

The arch (when we first moved in) however, was simply an empty shell, and a badly leaking one at that. The back wall was made up of half-rotten sheets of plywood, there were no toilets, no adequate lighting and the electrical wiring needed urgent attention. All of these shortcomings were immediately addressed, at great expense to Kalliopi, to create a perfect sculpture studio for the long term.

The wall at the rear of the property was rebuilt with breeze blocks and a large window put in. A spiral staircase leading up to a mezzanine floor and kitchen area was also constructed, with two toilets and a shower room below. The wiring was completely re-done and 3-phase power was also added at a later date. Large areas of the arch were lined, to minimise the leaking, a hot water boiler was installed and industrial lighting was fitted throughout.

The main doors have been reinforced with sheet steel, the rotten fire door replaced, an online burglar/fire alarm system installed and the property is now kept in good condition throughout.

All of this work on the arch has been carried as an investment for the long term and at no expense to TfL. Sculptures leave studio 11A and go on to be exhibited all over the world, with large scale pieces being regularly installed throughout London, and there are also regular visits by curators, gallery owners and other artists to the studio.

The current space, having evolved over time into the perfect studio for our needs, would be one that (without similar levels of investment) would be incredibly difficult, if not impossible to find elsewhere. Being made to move out in the near future is a difficult prospect to come to terms with, and one we would very much like to avoid if at all possible.

Tim Peacock
Studio manager for Kalliopi Lemos

JOHN NIXON - BESPOKE FURNITURE MAKER (KRAFWORK)

Mayor upheaval!

Loss of local business.

Cost of fitting out new studio if I have to relocate further out.

My employees won't be able to travel and I will have to let them go.

I'm close to retirement and don't want to start over building up a new client base.

Signed on behalf of Kilburn Mews Group
(A group of small businesses located in Transport for London's
railway arches in Kilburn NW6 2DS - now known as Kilburn Mews):



STUDIOFORMAS
MARCELO BENFIELD - PHOTOGRAPHER
14/17 The Arches, Loveridge Road, London NW6 2DS
Mobile: 07940 888538
Studio: 020 7625 7902
Email: marcelo@marcelobenfield.com
Link: <https://www.marcelobenfield.com>

IMAGO2 PHOTOGRAPHY
PAUL WEAVER - PHOTOGRAPHER
14/17 The Arches, Loveridge Road, London NW6 2DS
Mobile: 07887 68 1041
Studio: 020 73283301
Email: info@imago2.com
Link: <http://www.imago2.com>

KALLIOPI LEMOS
ARTIST
Arch 11A, Maygrove Road, London NW6 2DS
Studio Manager: Tim Peacock
Workshop: 020 7372 4004
Email: timpeacock@hotmail.com
Link: <http://kalliopilemos.com>

KRAFTWORK
JOHN NIXON - BESPOKE FURNITURE MAKER
Arch 13, Maygrove Rd, London NW6 2EB
Workshop: 020 3638 5718
Mobile: 07801 682631
Email: john.nixon@kraftwork.uk.com
Link: <https://kraftwork.uk.com>

SOUTHERN CROSS MOTORCYCLES
GREGORY PISHCHUGIN - OWNER
Arch 13A, Rear of 2 Maygrove Road, London NW6 2EB
Workshop: 020 7328 1428
Mobile: 07544 081185
Email: sxmc2london@gmail.com
Link: <http://www.southerncrossmotorcycles.co.uk>

PHOTOGRAPHS OF KILBURN MEWS TAKEN ON LATE SEPTEMBER 2022



Arch 9A - Vacant



Arch 10A - Vacant



Arch 11A - Kalliopi Lemos



Arch 12A - Kilburn State Of Mind



Arch 13A - Southern Cross Motorbikes



Arch 14A - Marketing Company



Arch 11 - Uknown Artists



Arch 12 - Uknown Artists



Arch 13 - Kraftwork Furniture Maker



Arch 14 - Kraftwork / Photo Studio



Arch 15 - Vacant/ Photo Studio



Arch 16/17 - Photo/Dance Studio

