

Railway Arches, Southwark

Gymnasium Group

● Planning



Planning Potential swiftly secured planning permission to bring two vacant railway arches back into active commercial use as a Gymnasium fitness facility in Southwark.

Demonstrating our ability to unlock constrained commercial spaces, combining policy expertise, technical evidence, and proactive engagement to secure timely approvals supporting an operator's business model.

The Challenge

The proposals sought to facilitate the occupation of long-vacant railway arches in Kennington by Gymnasium Group through extended opening hours and external alterations. The existing consent restricted operating hours, creating a barrier to occupation.

The scheme needed to demonstrate that early morning access and longer opening hours would not result in unacceptable noise or disturbance to nearby residential uses, while also securing design consent for a new modern frontage.

Without clear justification and supporting evidence, the proposals risked refusal, continued vacancy of the arches, and failure to bring the units back into productive commercial use.

Our Approach

- Undertook due diligence appraisal of lawful use and identified restrictive operating conditions
- Prepared and submitted a Section 73 application to vary restrictions on operating hours
- Coordinated detailed noise evidence prepared by acoustic consultants
- Demonstrated compliance with local and national planning policy
- Submitted a parallel full planning application for external alterations and a new frontage
- Maintained proactive dialogue with officers throughout the determination process

The Outcome

- Planning permission secured to extend opening hours and allow early morning access
- Approval granted for external alterations including a high-quality modern frontage
- Both applications approved without delay by the local planning authority
- Vacant railway arches brought back into active commercial use as a fitness facility