

CROSSRAIL PETITION No 25.

Mercury Theatres Ltd is a tenant and the Stafford Partnership are freeholders of 15 Monmouth Street and have jointly petitioned against Crossrail. We feel the proposed tunnel is too close to ground level and train operations will adversely affect us. From the top of the tunnel to just below the foundations we understand will be a mere 30 feet. We think the noise of the trains running will be audible and that vibration or low frequency sound will be apparent. This will adversely affect the recording studio at 15 Monmouth Street.

Mercury Theatres Ltd. is one of the leading post production film editing companies in London. Clients include the BBC, Paramount Pictures Corporation, DreamWorks Studios and many other international film and TV producers. Their location in Covent Garden is essential. Actors, Translators, Editors and Directors travel from all over the world to record voice-overs and dialogue in many languages to add to or to localise films and TV programmes for worldwide distribution.

Many of the documentaries you see on your TV screen or films you enjoy at your local cinema have probably passed through the post production facilities at 15 Monmouth Street. Such is their credibility with the world of movies that Mercury store on their premises over 10,000 tapes for Paramount Studios so that these materials and features can be swiftly modified here in London for worldwide markets.

Should a disaster befall Mercury Theatres so they cannot continue at Monmouth Street due to continuous train noise from the operation of the Crossrail line, they will either have to improve sound-proofing in their recording studio or, worse, re-locate to other, unaffected premises. Either option will cost money and disrupt their business.

Fortunately there is a simple and inexpensive solution. The sound engineers at Munro Acoustics can place sound and vibration sensors and record their findings over a 24 hour period prior to commencement of Crossrail works. The results can be made available and

agreed by all parties. Should sound and vibration levels fluctuate significantly in the future, comparisons can be made and remedies employed. The promoters of Crossrail have rejected this solution.

As petitioners we are aware of the present shortcomings of train and track maintenance for the UK's transport system. These have been amply recorded by the national press. Worn tracks, cracked rails, poorly maintained signalling equipment and so on have been responsible for many casualties. In particular, poor maintenance at Kings Cross underground station resulted in a fire which members can probably recall. The Kings Cross escalator; subject to routine maintenance from experts and no doubt inspected as a legal requirement by experts from the company's insurers, caught fire from a lethal accumulation of dirt, dust, debris and oil with disastrous consequences. It gives us no comfort to remind the committee of these facts but faced with this evidence, we have grave doubts that future maintenance of wheels and tracks will control the level of groundborne noise and vibration as is claimed by Crossrail's promoters.

SUMMARY

We would be grateful if the committee could consider the following suggestions prior to commencement of works:

- that 15 Monmouth Street is listed as Stage 3 protected status.
- that a schedule of condition is agreed between the undertaker's and freeholder's surveyors.
- that a Settlement Deed (similar to the one currently being offered by Crossrail's promoters) be entered into, suitably modified to record the pre-existing levels of sound and vibration.
- that this Deed form part of the building's records and filed accordingly at the Land Registry.

Your humble petitioners:

Mercury Theatres Ltd and the Stafford Partnership