



**Statement of Community Involvement**  
**Floating Water Garden, Merchant Square**  
**October 2016**



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## **1.0 Introduction**

This Statement of Community Involvement has been compiled by Belgrave on behalf of European Land.

Belgrave were appointed in June 2016 to perform a comprehensive Public Relations and Public Affairs role.

The report details the public consultation carried out to date in order to inform the evolution of the proposals. Consultation has been carried out in accordance with national and regional policies, as is laid out in section 2.0 of this report.

The key aims of the pre-application stage of the public consultation, which this report documents, were:

1. To inform local residents, businesses, councillors and other stakeholders about the proposed water garden in the Paddington Basin.
2. To gain a full understanding of local views of the proposals, engage with the local and wider community throughout the design development stage, and use this feedback to identify concerns and opportunities.

In addition, this report demonstrates how European Land has a continued commitment towards consultation and engagement throughout the statutory planning process.

## **2.0 The Policy Framework**

**2.1** Section 61W of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 added by the Localism Act 2011 places a legal duty on developers to consult local communities on very large scale development proposals prior to submitting a planning application.

**2.2** Westminster City Council's *Statement of Community Involvement in Planning* policy, adopted in June 2014, makes clear that community involvement should ideally be sought in two stages:

Firstly, views should be sought from interested groups on what may be appropriate for a site so that these comments can, wherever possible, be taken on board before the proposals are drawn up; and

Secondly, further views should be sought on the evolving proposals before a planning application be submitted, so that changes can be made in response before submission, and also so that people are already aware of the background and the proposals when the Council carries out consultations on the application.

**2.3** The two stages have been addressed through the consultation programme undertaken, as outlined in sections four and five.

**2.3** For large scale proposals where there is no legal requirement to consult, the City Council agrees with the suggestion in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that it should strongly encourage developers to involve the local community from an early stage. They suggest that this should take a variety of forms such as local exhibitions, public meetings, circulation of leaflets or the creation of a well-publicised dedicated website, including a facility to make comments.

**2.4** The consultation strategy devised and implemented by Belgrave has been designed to meet the requirements for consultation as laid out by the NPPF and Westminster City Council.



### **3.0 Summary of the proposed application**

#### *Planning Description of Development*

- 3.1** *'Construction of two floating pontoon structures with a total area of 729 sqm comprising hard and soft landscaping, two mooring points and associated works, in association with the change in use of land over which water flows from a navigable waterway to open space.'*



#### **4.0 The consultation process**

The consultation process that Belgrave has undertaken with respect to the proposed development of the Water Garden is fully in line with the requirements of the City Council's Statement of Community Involvement, and other consultation guidelines. Specifically, Belgrave has:

1. Ensured that the consultation has taken place as early as possible in the process;
2. Conducted an engagement programme that is appropriate for the local community and key stakeholders;
3. Conducted a well- publicised and accessible exhibition;
4. Explained clearly what the scope of the consultation is and what can and cannot be changed;
5. Analysed the results from the consultation objectively;
6. Publicised collective responses, with due regard to the Data Protection Act;
7. Summarised how these responses have informed the proposals;

#### **4.1 Pre-application discussion with Councillor Davis, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for the Built Environment**

During the pre-application phase a meeting was held with Councillor Davis to discuss the proposed Water Garden.

The meeting took place on August 16<sup>th</sup> 2016.

#### **4.2 The public exhibition**

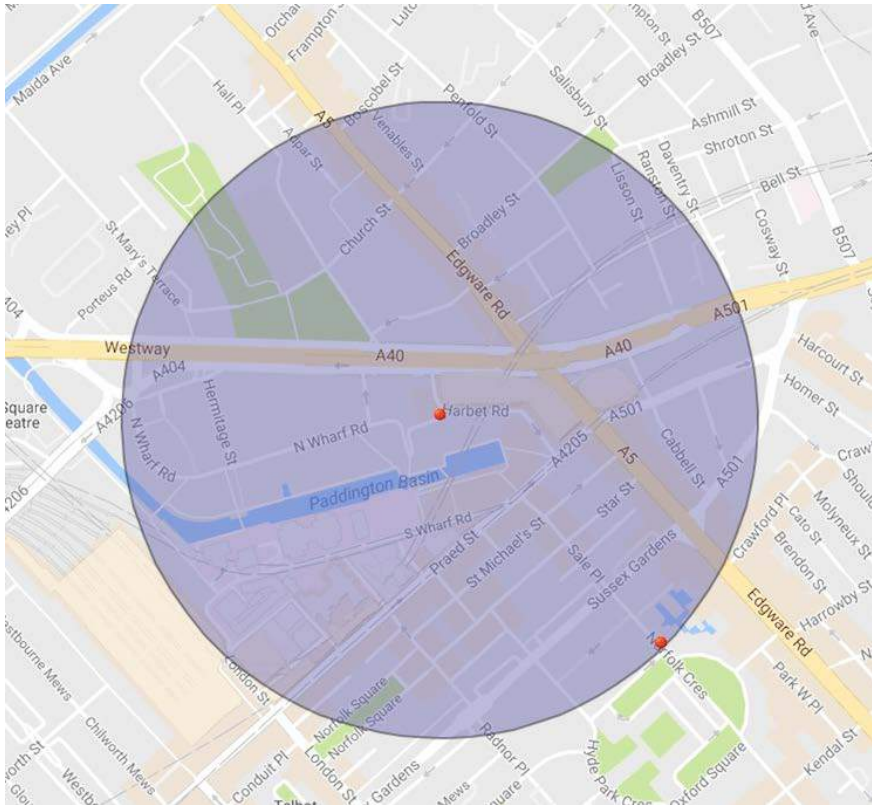
As part of the consultation process it was decided to hold a public exhibition on September 14<sup>th</sup> 2016.

The location was The Pavilion, Merchant Square.

The public consultation was publicised by the delivery of over 4,000 leaflets to residents and businesses in the local vicinity.

**Appendix A** is a copy of the invitation that was issued.

The distribution area is below:



**4.3** Ward Councillors were invited to the exhibition and invited to a meeting if they could not attend but wanted further information.

**4.4 Attendance at the public exhibition**

At the exhibition were representatives of Belgrave and European Land

Twenty five people attended the public exhibition.

Amongst the attendees were Cllr Antonia Cox and the Chair of the South East Bayswater Residents Association.

A series of exhibition boards were displayed around the room. The exhibition boards are available at **Appendix B**.

At the exhibition, visitors were asked to fill in a feedback form. They could either do so at the exhibition or take away with them to fill in at home and send back via a pre-paid envelope.

**Appendix C** is a copy of the feedback form the people were asked to fill in.

**4.5 Analysis of the feedback forms**

Thirteen feedback forms were filled in by attendees of the exhibition.

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive:



### Q1 – Do you think the floating water garden is a good idea

Strongly agree – 85%

Agree – 15%

### Q2 - Do you like the design of the water garden?

Strongly agree – 69%

Agree – 23%

Neutral – 8%

Alongside the questions, attendees were asked to either provide a comment on the feedback form or on a post-it note.

The comments received were:

#### Feedback form

1	Very nice, will add beauty to the area
2	Would be in favour of any additional green space
3	More seats/benches. More water fountains for the kids to play outdoor. Café/Bar. Otherwise excellent and worthwhile initiative
4	It is a good idea to add life and interest to this area. But the expanse of water is lovely for the ducks and swans that have to live there. I feel the scheme is too large and could be much smaller to leave some water space for natural habitat
5	A very positive development
6	I welcome the idea of creating more convivial environment in the Paddington Basin area. I look forward to seeing the plans to completion
7	Lovely idea as long as it doesn't get too noisy at night
8	It will be great to have more nature and more places to sit by the canal
9	Great if we are informed of the progress as we can't wait
10	Will be a venue for me to bring my visitors
11	Green spaces always welcome

#### Post It Notes

1	Looks fantastic
2	Looking forward to it opening
3	Great concept. Great garden. JZ
4	Amazing
5	I think it is a good idea to bring some life to that side of the basin and look forward to seeing it next year
6	Nice idea
7	Great idea – so long as no pests are attracted or litter
8	Be good to have child friendly planning and it to be a haven for bees and wildlife maybe. Local children could have classes by the landscapers

**Appendix D** provides further analysis of the feedback forms

**Appendix E** is a list of all the comments received





#### **4.6 Alterations to the scheme post-exhibition**

Following the feedback from local residents and officers at the City Council the following amends have been made to the scheme:

- Footprint reduced from 756sqm to 729sqm, allowing wildlife to pass
- Increased planting along the Eastern edge
- Removal of the Eastern bridge line to give a greater sense of a garden floating in the body of the water



## **5.0 Commitment to Continued Engagement**

- 5.1** European Land has undertaken public consultation in advance of submitting a planning application to ensure local stakeholders have had an opportunity to comment on the emerging proposals.
- 5.2** This Statement of Community Involvement demonstrates that European Land is committed to thorough and meaningful public consultation. The submission of the planning application does not mark the end of this consultation and 57 Whitehall SARL will continue to meet with local groups and individuals as appropriate throughout the process.



**Appendix A** Copy of the invitation issued to the public exhibition

# Floating Garden proposed for the Canal



European Land is committed to creating an environment that helps make Paddington an attractive destination for local residents, workers and visitors.

With our spectacular bridge and our summer series of activities we have been working hard to create a real sense of place.

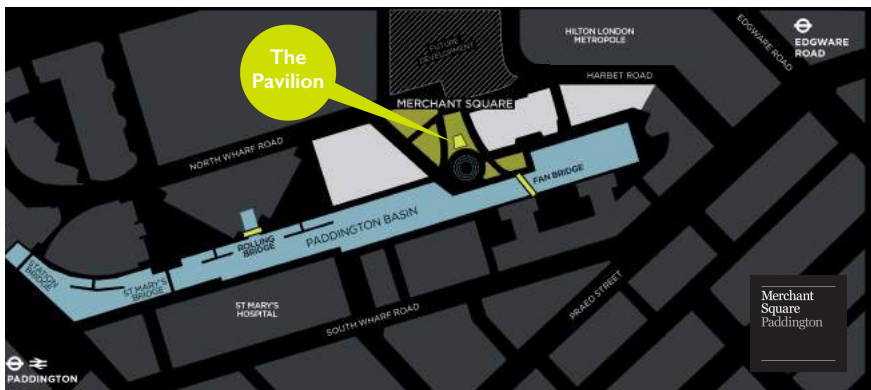
Next year we would like to continue our investment in Paddington by bringing a stunning floating garden to the heart of the canal.

We would be delighted if you could join us and see our proposals as we unveil them for the first time.

**When:** Wednesday 14th September 15:30 – 19:30

**Where:** The Pavilion, Merchant Square, W2 1BF

For more information please contact Nick Dines at [ndines@belgravecomms.com](mailto:ndines@belgravecomms.com) or **0203 170 7987**.



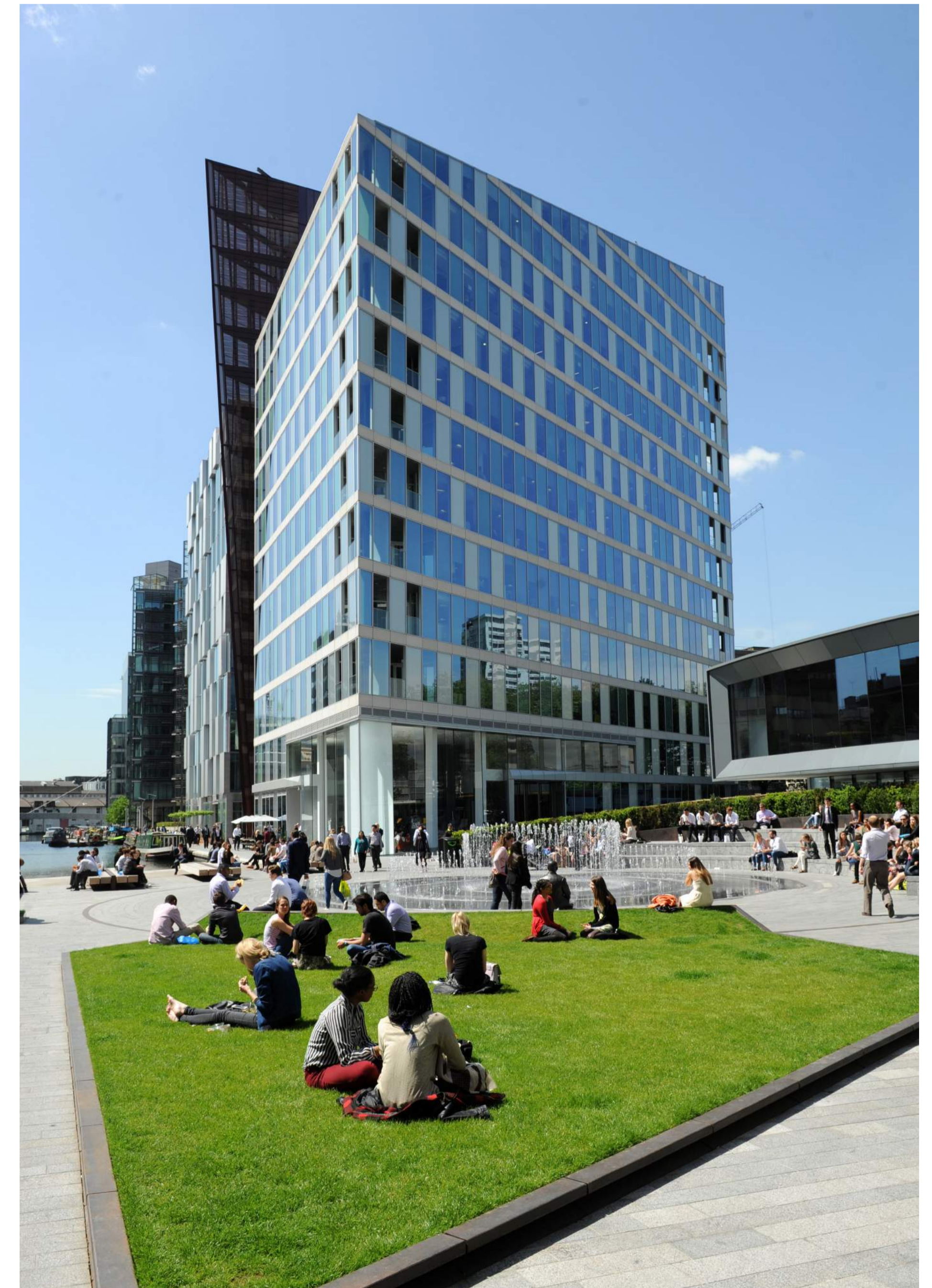


**Appendix B** Public exhibition boards



# History

Merchant Square, owned by European Land, is an 11 acre, fully managed mixed use Estate in the heart of the Paddington Basin that is currently occupied by 10,000 workers and residents.





# What has been achieved so far...and what is to come





# Events in Merchant Square

The dedicated on-site Merchant Square team oversee an annual events programme, involving summer events during lunchtimes, charity events, food markets and much more.

## Free Paddleboarding every Wednesday

Run by Active360, free paddleboarding sessions are available every Wednesday between 12:30 and 13:00



## Big Screen

The Big Screen has been used to show top sporting events and will be on throughout the Paralympic Games in Rio



## Film and Photography

We are also proud that Merchant Square has been used as a location by many photographers and filmmakers, most noticeably this year, the Jason Bourne movie!



## Dragon Boat Racing

The annual Paddington Dragon Boat Regatta sees hundreds of people take to the water and raise money for COSMIC, which is seeking to raise £2m for the redevelopment of the children's intensive care unit at St Mary's Hospital.





# Eating and Drinking

The Food and Drink offer is crucial to creating a destination and we are delighted that Merchant Square is able to offer a mix of coffee shops, restaurants and street stalls.

## Established food and drink

### Can Do Coffee

Offers opportunities for disadvantaged and socially excluded people to become self-employed independent street traders. Serves coffee from beans that are ethically traded and roasted in London.

### Heist

Located at 5 North Wharf Road, Heist Bank is the new playground for grown ups in Paddington. Serves wood fired pizzas, locally brewed beers and flower displays by Botanique.

### Pizza Express

Overlooking the Paddington Basin, the Pizza Express in Merchant Square is constantly chosen as a lunch or after work destination by the many workers in the local area

### KuPP

A new & innovative concept with a distinct Scandi twist... canal side KuPP's menu uses Scandinavian ingredients in a British way, cultivating all day dining, grazing, drinking and socialising.

## Crave Street Food Market - Tuesday & Thursday, Noon - 15:00

### Pochi

Japanese, Soboro Bento style rice dishes

### Wow Savannah Taste

Authentic vegetarian and pescatarian tastes that are packed with nutrients

### Harold's Hog Roast

Sussex reared pork baps with home-made stuffing, apple sauce and cracking

### House of Dodo

Mauritian street food trader

### Prairie Fire

Slow-smoked, Kansas City style BBQ

### Bloom's Kitchen

The best kosher food this side of New York

### 800 Degrees

Authentic wood-fired pizza oven

### KurbSide Kitchen

Beef and pork hot dogs that some say are the best in London

### Rupert's Street

Freshly prepared, healthy vegan food

