

**Economic Development Statement for change of use of the
North Arms to a single detached house**



Mill's Ln, Wroxton, Banbury, OX15 6PY

1) Background

The North Arms was last traded as a tenanted pub owned by Greene King. It was sold by them in 2013. It has not been possible to find any accounts or of beer barrelage from that time, but given it was over 8 years ago it is doubtful how much could be inferred from that information.

In 2013 it was sold to a party who wished to pursue a change of use to residential. The local community objected and stated they wished to purchase the premises. Unfortunately by 2015 the community determined that it was unable to raise the funds but Fairleigh Dickinson university stepped in to provide the funds. It was purchased for £307,000 and the intention of the university was to re-open the premises as a pub.

In 2019 a planning application was submitted for a full refurbishment and this was approved in January 2020.

Unfortunately the University determined in February 2021 that it was not viable to re-open the North Arms and it was put on the market with Christies.

There were no interested parties who wished to purchase the pub to re-open it and it was sold to the current owners in August 2021 for £300,000.

After a pre planning meeting with Cherwell planning authority with a view to a change of use to residential application it was put on the market with Sidney Philips in September 2021 for £295,000.

To date it remains on the market and available.

2) Economic Viability

Brunton Knowles are a nationwide commercial chartered surveying practice. They have a specialist practice which provides viability assessments to Local Authorities and also to individuals seeking viability appraisals. Their report is submitted as part of the planning application.

The conclusion of this report is *“Having considered all the various factors and submissions, we are of the opinion that The North Arms is not financially viable and is not capable of being re-opened in the future.”*

3) Alternative uses

The owners have looked at potential other commercial uses. These included:

1) Restaurant

The same restrictions on the building operating as a pub would apply if it were to be a restaurant only. Additionally it is likely that as a pure restaurant the

potential turnover would be lower and hence the viability case would further deteriorate.

2) Nursery

Whilst the building has the necessary outside space and off road parking the size and layout of the building would not be suitable. It's grade II listed nature would prohibit the necessary changes being made.

3) Convenience Store.

The size and layout of the building would not be suitable and its grade II listed nature would prohibit the necessary changes being made.

4) B&B

The layout of the building would not be suitable and its grade II listed nature would prohibit the necessary changes being made.

The Parish Council and local councillors were contacted and asked if they knew of anyone who would take the pub on. (Appendix B). The applicant believes the matter was raised in the November meeting but no interested parties in purchasing the pub came forward.

4) Employment Considerations

The property last operated as a pub over 8 years ago so there is no loss of employment in a conversion to residential. Indeed given the amount of work required on the property a change of use would actually generate a significant amount of employment for local tradesmen, particularly for specialists such as stone masons and thatchers.

As detailed in the viability study in order to operate the North Arms as a pub it would require at least one FTE in addition to a couple running/owning the property. However, as the study details this operation would not be economically viable, therefore it would not be true to say that the change of use would result in any loss of employment since if the property operates as a pub it would not generate a positive return hence any employment would not be sustainable. Additionally in the examination of alternative uses none of these viable so again there would be no sustainable employment opportunities from these.

5) Other Issues

The North Arms has been available on a number of occasions since 2013 when it last was open. It remains currently on the market with one of the largest national pub agencies and has been widely advertised through all channels including, Rightmove, Zoopla and Daltons. This has resulted in 12 viewings but of these only 2 were as a potential pub use and both of these parties stated that they didn't believe the building was the right size and layout in order to create a viable business. All possible avenues in terms of marketing have been undertaken and it seems there are no circumstances in which extending the marketing period is likely to result in a party coming forward to reopen the pub. Any

further delay is only likely to result in the further deterioration of the fabric of the building.

6) Conclusion

The Bruton Knowles viability study clearly indicates the property is not viable to re-open as a pub. It has been closed for 8 years, any previous customers of the pub are using alternative premises. The previous owners were very committed to the building being re-opened as a pub but in the end they found that to do so would mean losing money, not only in the refurbishment but also just in the regular ongoing trade.

Alternative commercial uses have been investigated but none seem suitable. Whilst the loss of a public house may be regrettable there are alternative facilities within the location and the permanent closure whilst regrettable, does not represent a loss to the community. Indeed if the building can not be converted to residential use it will simply remain empty with the further subsequent degradation of this visually attractive and grade II listed building.

Appendix A – Marketing of the North Arms

Christie Marketing May 2021



The North Arms Ref: 915154

Mills Lane Banbury, Wroxton, OX15 6PY

Freehold: £295,000

Grade II Listed nonstone period building
Set in the affluent village of Wroxton
Close to various tourist landmarks
0.27 acre site
Suitable for alternative use (STP)
EPC Exempt

CHRISTIE & CO christie.com

Sidney Philips September 2021 to present



NORTH ARMS
Mills Lane, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX15 6PY

Freehold Offers Over £295,000

• Thatched 17th Century village free house Ref: 91515
• 2 character interconnecting bars
• 3 bed owners accommodation
• Large stone built outbuilding
• Gardens and car parking
• Currently closed and unfurnished

01981 250333
midlands@sidneyphillips.co.uk

Sidney Phillips

Wroxton Commercial Property | +


primelocation.com/for-sale/commercial/property/wroxton/

PrimeLocation Find your dream home

Wroxton Within 1 mile

Filters and keywords

Price and area size live here



£295,000 (£0.09/sq. ft)


PUB/BAR FOR SALE
Banbury, Oxford OX15
↳ 295,000 sq. m*

2 character interconnecting bars 3 bed owners accommodation Large stone built outbuilding Gardens and car parking Currently closed and unfurnished freehold offers over £295,000 [read more >](#)

Sidney Phillips
Sidney Phillips

Pub/bar for sale in Banbury, Oxf | +

zoopla.co.uk/for-sale/commercial/details/59731170/



8 images

Pub/bar for sale
Banbury, Oxford OX15
£295,000
(£0.09/sq. ft)

Sidney Phillips
Sidney Phillips
01981 286951

Email agent

Save

Property details | Map & Nearby

3,175,354 sq. ft

Last 30 days: 83 page views

Feedback

Wroxton, Businesses For Sale & Rent

rightbiz.co.uk/businesses-for-sale-in-wroxton-oxfordshire.html

Businesses For Sale in Wroxton

+5 miles radius

78 Businesses for sale and to rent in Wroxton +5 miles radius. Including undisclosed locations. (0.011 seconds)

All Businesses » Oxfordshire » Wroxton

Save Search Per Page: 20 Newest First

Amend your search:

Sector: New Businesses for Sale

Location: Wroxton, Oxfordshire

Radius: Within 5 miles


Add Relocatable

Search Now

Filter by:

Added: Anytime

Tenure: Freehold



OXFORDSHIRE - THATCHED 17TH CENTURY FREE HOUSE

0.2 miles from Wroxton

Updated: 2 months ago

One-Click Contact

Contact Seller View Details »

Freehold £295,000

Saved Businesses

Appendix B – Email to Parish Council

FW: North Arms - Message (HTML)

File Message Help McAfee Anti-Spam Acrobat Tell me what you want to do

Ignore Delete Archive Mark as Spam Mark as Not Spam Add Friend Reply Reply All Forward Create New Move to: ? To Manager Team Email Reply & Delete Move Mark Unread Follow Up Read Aloud Immersive Reader Translate Zoom

FW: North Arms

James Collins (jamescollins22@googlemail.com)

To: wbpwrox@gmail.com

Cc: cllr.collinge@gmail.com; cllr.collins@gmail.com; Cllr.garwood@gmail.com; Cllr.giles@gmail.com; cllr.ker@gmail.com; cllr.marcovitch@gmail.com; cllr.robarts@gmail.com

Mon 01/11/2021 09:17

From: jamescollins22@googlemail.com <jamescollins22@googlemail.com>

Sent: 28 October 2021 09:34

To: wbpwrox@gmail.com

Subject: North Arms

Good morning

I work for the new owners of the North Arms and wanted to introduce myself. As the parish council may be aware we purchased the pub at the end of August and then put the property back on the market. Unfortunately we don't believe it is viable to re-open as a pub, much as the college who sold it to us concluded. Unfortunately it just hasn't the possible number of covers and available kitchen space to make it work.

I am writing to the Parish Council to ensure the village is aware that it is available for another party to purchase to re-open as pub or other commercial use. It is a beautiful building that has been left empty for 8 years and it needs to be repaired, restored and given a purpose. As such should we not find a buyer we will be submitting an application to convert it to a house.

Happy to answer any questions

Best regards
James Collins

Appendix C – Marketing report from Sidney Philips

This has been included as a separate attachment