

# Comment for planning application 22/00256/F

<b>Application Number</b>	22/00256/F
<b>Location</b>	North Arms Inn Mills Lane Wroxton OX15 6PY
<b>Proposal</b>	Change of Use from public house to single residential dwelling
<b>Case Officer</b>	James Kirkham
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Sylvia Wade
<b>Address</b>	5 Church Street,Wroxton,Banbury,OX15 6QE
<b>Type of Comment</b>	Objection
<b>Type</b>	neighbour
<b>Comments</b>	<p>The North Arms is a valuable, integral and essential part of our community. Since it's closure the community has noticeably suffered, there are nowhere near as many social events, we do not hear about anyone in need, and many of our elderly or single residents became more isolated long before the pandemic. The North Arms' location right in the centre of the village made it easily accessible for all, even the more elderly residents could and would walk there. It was a thriving centre for village life and enabled residents to keep in touch in a way that nowhere else could. Obviously not everyone wants to attend church &amp; although we have a village hall it is not just open to drop into and it's location is difficult for older residents unless they drive. The North Arms was highly profitable, provided local jobs as it was so busy and had a reputation that attracted visitors from far &amp; wide. This only changed when it was taken over by a different brewery. Any suggestions that it is "not viable as a business" stem from that point, as that particular brewery hugely hiked up costs to landlords, imposed enormous restrictions on what they could stock (for example banning hugely popular "country wines" &amp; guest beers), insisted absolutely everything, not just beer, be purchased from them at vastly inflated cost and refused to carry out maintenance work. Consequently the pub became run-down, unattractive, expensive and lost its unique character. Research suggested this was something of a pattern allowing change of use permissions to be readily granted up &amp; down the country so the pubs could be sold off at higher profit. As a village we had made considerable headway in purchasing the North Arms when this happened the first time, we had plans to launch a much needed village/gift shop from the stables, a tourist centre, maybe even a separate cafe or meeting area that could be hired out. We agreed to suspend this project &amp; defer our attempt to purchase when Fairleigh Dickinson expressed interest in buying and running the pub, as they had greater financial resources to re-instate our village pub sooner. When they sold due to the difficulties imposed by covid and having the project partly managed by a committee based outside the UK, they were assured that the purchaser intended to run it as a pub. The people of Wroxton &amp; surrounding area need to have this application to change the use of this property turned down. In the right ownership it could once again be a thriving business. There is room for it to offer overnight accommodation, scope for a separate shop, cafe, gallery area for local arts etc. Cherwell District Council must support the needs and wishes of its local communities above those of individuals seeking to make a quick profit. Allowing change of use will be detrimental to the people of Wroxton &amp; it's surrounding area with no benefit to anyone except that individual. If given the chance to operate again as a pub it will benefit many people in many ways - even Banbury as a whole. There is an argument that country pubs suffer due to requiring transport, but the popularity of other local venues such as The Falkland Arms in Great Tew &amp; The Indian Queen restaurant at Wroxton Heath prove that this can be overcome. If it's reputation is restored and it attracts visitors from much further afield as it once did the whole area, including Banbury, will benefit.</p>
<b>Received Date</b>	22/02/2022 16:23:22
<b>Attachments</b>	