

CHARTFORD HOMES
 Bracken House
 9 Kerry Street
 Horsforth
 Leeds
 LS18 4AW
 CT/RA
 30 November 2007

Dear Mr Mullholland

SUMMERCROSS PUBLIC HOUSE, OTLEY

Thank you for your letter of the 26th November 2007.

Text of the letter	Initial comments on the text (as of 13 Dec 07)
<p>I note the concern of your constituents with regard to the closure of the Summencross Inn and we appreciate their desire to retain this feature of their community. However, we understand that for quite some time the trade had been declining such that the tenant had not looked to extend his lease which was due to expire and indeed vacated the property before his existing lease expired.</p>	<p>Yes the local community does wish to retain the Summencross as an integral part of its social fabric.</p> <p>The current landlord was proving to be very popular, he had a growing trade and tried to renew his lease. However, the pub was first sold over his head and then he was effectively "squeezed out".</p>
<p>At the time we purchased the property we obtained a valuation report from a leading Valuer of such properties and his opinion was that the current business is under trading due to lack of customers, previous failures and lack of consistency in ownership.</p>	<p>This may have been the opinion of the Valuer who was employed by the prospective developer.</p> <p>Up to the point that the landlord was given notice to quit, his business was expanding and starting to make a return.</p>
<p>When we acquired the property our inspection revealed that the bar area, cellar, living accommodation and particularly the kitchen were run down, in a poor state of repair and the kitchen was certainly not fit for the preparation of food for the general public.</p>	<p>The building was extensively refurbished about ten years ago by Cutlers (when they purchased the Summencross and turned it into a Pub-Restaurant).</p> <p>The kitchen is still in good condition, the equipment is only three years old and the Summencross has the necessary environmental health certificates from Leeds City Council for the preparation of food.</p> <p>The standard of the beer cellar is very high, enabling the Summencross to be awarded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Casque Mark accreditation by the Cask Marque Trust • Black Sheep Flagsheep award for the high standard of its beers • Leeds CAMRA most improved pub of the season award.
<p>I am sure you will agree this reflects the difficulties facing the licensed trade in general and in particular Otley bearing in mind the over provision of public houses.</p>	<p>The landlord wished to make further improvements to the Summencross but lacked the certainty of his lease to do so.</p> <p>The location of the Summencross (and the car parking) means that the pub is not in direct competition with the town centre pubs and it attracts a different clientele.</p>
<p>It is our intention, subject to Local Authority planning permission, to redevelop the site and due to the sensitivity of the matter, which we fully appreciate, we have employed the services of a conservation architect to prepare a scheme which will mirror the row of Victorian terraced houses opposite to create a complete community around the memorial gardens as a central feature</p>	<p>It is the sustainability, vibrancy and integrity of an already existing community which is threatened by the closure of the Summencross.</p>
<p>I feel that the development proposed will enhance the area generally and trust that the local community will support this.</p>	<p>This is not a view which is shared by the local community which will vigorously resist any development proposal.</p>

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

CHRIS THOMPSON
 Managing Director