Ref. 2500078FUL

Great Gransden Parish Council proposes a refusal of this application for Change of Use for the following reasons:

1. The NPPF 2024 which has "a presumption in favour of sustainable development" sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):

- building a strong, competitive economy; ***(a vibrant, functioning public house could and should be at the centre of Great Gransden's economy)***
- conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment ***(conserving this Grade II listed building which is there already will preserve the historic centre of the village)***

2. Paragraph 88 of the NPPF 2024 in supporting a prosperous rural economy, favours "the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, ***public houses*** and places of worship."

It is our view that demonstrable harm can be seen by this proposal and therefore under the guidelines of the NPPF 2024 alone should be refused.

3. Local Plan Policy LP22 seeks to protect local services and community facilities, which by definition includes public houses. The policy is clear that, where permitted development rights do not apply, a proposal which involves the loss of a local service or community facility will only enjoy policy support if:

- An equivalent service or community facility will be provided in a location with an equal or better level of accessibility for the community it is intended to serve; ***(the loss of the last public house in the village does not fulfil this criterion)***
- It demonstrates that there is no reasonable prospect of that service or facility being retained or restored because either:

(i) there is insufficient community support for its continuation; ***(the great level of support for the pub re-opening is witnessed by well over 100 objections from villagers against this application and in a recent village survey (with 295 responses) 93% in favour of the pub reopening)***

(ii) reasonable steps have been taken to effectively market the property for its current use without success. ***(It is our contention that this has not been met despite the applicant claiming this, as to market a property for over a year and to only have one viewing and two offers means an ineffective marketing campaign. Additionally, the asking price is purely aspirational and does not represent true market value, being more than double the value as determined by a recent RICS Red Book valuation carried out independently. Only the Red Book valuation has a legal status in a Court of Law. The vendors have not shown any desire to discuss a potential reduction in price or engage in any meaningful discussion with potential buyers. These reasons and others, including but not limited to the lack of a For Sale sign on the property, demonstrate a complete failure of the marketing exercise to comply with even the most basic minimum requirements for such an exercise commonly set by many local authorities.)***

4. Local Plan Policy LP9 states in its rationale that a Small Settlement which offers a range of services such as a shop, village hall, public house and primary school offers far greater opportunities in principle for sustainable development than a Small Settlement with few or no services or facilities. ***(The closure of the final public house in the village does not accord with the aims of Policy LP9)***
5. Policy G12 of the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Development Plan states in its policy context and rationale that "residents consider that any increase in the number of dwellings in Great Gransden should be accompanied by improvements in community facilities…decided on the basis of local priorities" (***The closure of the last pub in the village does not meet this policy objective as witnessed by the large number of objections to this proposal.)***

The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the proposed change of use is acceptable in principle, rendering the application contrary to Local Plan Policies LP9 and LP22, NPPF paragraph 88 as well as Policy G12 of the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Dated: 3rd March 2025