

From:
Sent: 29 August 2013 22:01
To: CineworldCityScreen
Cc:
Subject: Cambridge Arts Picturehouse

We have only in the last 48 hours heard of the preliminary determinations of your Commission about the acquisition of the Arts Picturehouse chain by Cineworld.

We want to express in the strongest possible terms our alarm that a future decision by the Commission might in any way lead to the demise of the Cambridge Arts Picturehouse.

We are a retired couple, recently settled in Cambridge after 25 years in rural Lincolnshire. The vibrancy of the arts scene here is an absolute delight; and prominent in this is what is continually offered by the Arts Picturehouse.

From limited press reports, it seems the Commission is worried about two things: (a) a reduction in competition; and (b) that this move "would lead to higher prices for customers."

With regard to competition, Cineworld at the outset published an assurance that the strategy and ethos of the Arts Picturehouse would remain unaltered. There is so far absolutely no sign of any departure from that assurance.

Why, therefore, should you be raising fears in the minds of local residents on the basis of a, so far, completely groundless hypothesis (= 'guess')?

With regard to prices, you are making the quite unsubstantiated assumption that price is what matters most to habitual patrons of the Arts Picturehouse. Of course, we care - we are retired, and we don't want to have to spend more than is necessary.

But does it not occur to you that quality is at least as important as cost; and that we might well be prepared to spend a pound or two more to be able to continue to enjoy the sort of programme which the Cambridge Arts Picturehouse offers?

Please, we implore you, look at the wider picture which brings in unquantifiable things like quality of life. That simply means holding Cineworld to their promises. You can be sure there will be plenty of us who will quickly tell you if those assurances are being eroded!

We are so far copying this only to our local Councillor and to our MP, Dr Julian Huppert. But in the absence of an early (within the next week) reassurance from you that you have a totally open mind and are in no way influenced by other, different and irrelevant, competition models, we shall set about distributing it more widely.

With kind regards

David and Caroline Wilson