

From: Lucy Taylor
Sent: 20 August 2013 19:46
To: CineworldCityScreen
Subject: potential sale of Cineworld or Picturehouse cinema in Cambridge

To the Inquiry Manager:

I am writing to express my alarm at the possibility of the sale of one of Cambridge's cinemas in the wake of the acquisition of Picturehouse by Cineworld. I realise that such a sale could be conducted in such a way that either cinema would continue to function, but it seems very possible that this would not be the case. I am particularly concerned about the possibility of Cambridge Arts Picturehouse being sold: this cinema, of which I have been a member for a number of years, is at the heart of Cambridge's cultural life, and provides a diverse cinematic experience (rare documentaries, foreign language films, lower budget independent films, director Q & A sessions, live arts broadcasts, as well as the best of the mainstream releases) not offered by any other cinema in the area, as well as a thriving café/restaurant, which is a favourite meeting-point for a huge cross-section of Cambridge folk. Any sale to a party who would not respect and uphold the commitment to providing this experience would simply not be accepted by the huge local community of cinemagoers who, like me, love this place and all it provides.

I am sure there would also be large numbers of local people who would object to the disappearance of Cineworld: this is currently the only civilised multiplex showing all mainstream releases in Cambridge.

I understand that the Commission's concern is to perpetuate healthy competition within the areas it investigates, and that, on the face of it, this is not encouraged by Cineworld's ownership of both these cinemas. However, whatever happens as a result of the Commission's Inquiry, we need to be assured that both cinemas can continue to serve their current purpose. There is a clear need for both cinemas in the city, operating absolutely as they do at present: they largely serve completely different sections of the community. They are just as different from each other, if not more so, than they were before Picturehouse's acquisition by Cineworld-and therefore I can't see how prices are any more likely to rise at either cinema than they were before the acquisition. Maybe I am just being naive. To be honest, though, a modest rise in ticket prices at the Picturehouse would be infinitely preferable to its disappearance or metamorphosis into another mainstream cinema.

I hope that it is possible to conclude your inquiry and make proposals based on what the local community actually wants, rather than on a faceless and arbitrary concern with figures.

Yours sincerely,

Lucy Taylor