

Last orders for Fox and Crane

by MORT BIRCH



ONE of Nuneaton's best known pubs is to close in less than three weeks' time.

The death knell has finally been sounded for the Fox and Crane at Weddington.

Developers are believed to have bought the pub and earmarked the site for luxury apartments

Rumours about the future of the Weddington Road pub have been circulating for some time, but its fate has now been decided.

Stunned staff have been told that "last orders" will be sounded at the pub on Thursday January 17.

A spokesperson for brewers Mitchells and Butlers told the Evening News: "We review our pub estate on a regular basis and have taken the decision to sell the Fox and Crane.

"The pub will stop trading on January 17. All of our staff have been fully briefed and we will look to offer them redeployment opportunities in our other local business where possible."

Formerly named the Weddington Hotel and one of the most popular pubs in the area, it was once a substantial private home and was affectionately known to people down the years as 'The Grove.'

The rumours about its future gathered strength before Christmas, but were shrouded in secrecy.

Just over a week ago, a Mitchells and Butlers spokesperson said: "Nothing has been agreed at this time and the Fox and Crane will continue to trade as normal over the Christmas period."

One customer, who did not want to be named, said: "None of the staff are happy about the way that this has been handled.

"They were not even told that the pub was up for sale and the next thing they

knew was that it had been sold"

The nearby Graziers Arms has also been sold to developers who want to build flats on the site and news of the latest closure will send more shock waves through the licensed trade in the area.

A number of licensees are known to be struggling against falling sales and competition from cut price beers and spirits in supermarkets.

Many of them have also been hit very badly by the smoking ban which has devastated trade.

Some have openly said they would see out Christmas and review their situation and the question is: Which pub will be next to pull its last pints.

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