

PRESS RELEASE FROM THE SAVE THE CABINET ACTION GROUP

Reed pub campaign group preparing for battle, as appeal “imminent”

Campaigners are launching a new fundraising effort in preparation for the next phase of their fight to prevent the Grade II listed Cabinet pub being turned permanently into a house. The group will hold a fund-raising “Pop-up Pub” night at Reed Village Hall on Saturday (19 August). A programme of other events is foreseen in the autumn.

The present owner of The Cabinet, a property developer, turned the building into a house without planning permission or listed building consent, only applying for these retrospectively. Last month, North Hertfordshire district councillors refused planning permission for change of use of the building to a private house.

But the Save the Cabinet Action Group warned that the battle was far from over. The developer has the right of appeal, and the listed building applications have not yet been determined.

Mike Howes, chair of the Action Group, said

“We think an appeal is inevitable – indeed, we hear on the grapevine that official notification of such an appeal may be imminent.

“We are confident we can persuade the planning inspector to refuse any such appeal and uphold the Council’s decision – but we need to raise money quickly to cover the costs of making our case in the most effective way possible.

“If the appeal is decided in our favour, we will expect North Herts District Council to show a firm hand in enforcing the law, and to require the developer to restore our pub.”

Saturday’s event sees Reed Village Hall converted into a pub for the evening. Supporters can call in for a drink and stay for as long or short a time as they wish. Previous events in Reed have attracted over 100 supporters. The “pub” opens at 6.30 pm and closes at 11pm. Admission is free.

Contacts (not for publication please):

NOTES FOR EDITORS

The Save the Cabinet Action Group was established in October 2016 to resist the application to turn The Cabinet at Reed into a house.

The Cabinet is a 400-year old building, and is considered a village icon – it even appears on the village sign. It is believed to be the only pub in Britain bearing the name.

The Cabinet was a thriving, popular pub, widely known as “a little gem”.

It closed in 2011 and was put up for sale. The Action Group provided evidence of several offers to buy the pub which were refused by the then owners. It was eventually sold at auction in late 2015 to the present owner for £375,000. Documents before the Planning Control Committee suggested that the building was, as a pub, valued at no more than £250,000.

The kitchen was removed during 2015, and further works were carried out in mid-2016. The retrospective applications for planning and listed building consent were submitted in September 2016.

Under Section 9 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, carrying out work to a listed building without first obtaining the necessary consent is a criminal offence.

The Action Group engaged Anthony Miller FRICS to prepare a viability study on The Cabinet.

Following the decision to refuse planning permission, the developer has 6 months to lodge an appeal. If he does, interested parties would have a further opportunity to make representations.

The 6 month period would be reduced if the planning authority decided to issue an enforcement notice under section 172 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990.

According to the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), 21 pubs are closing every week – see <http://www.camra.org.uk/kc2-pub-protection> .

More information is available on our Facebook page, “Save the Cabinet at Reed”.