

PRESS RELEASE FROM THE SAVE THE CABINET ACTION GROUP

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 24 OCTOBER 2018

Supporters urged to attend Cabinet appeal

Campaigners hoping to stop the 400-year-old Cabinet pub in Reed being turned permanently into a house are urging supporters to turn out in force when the planning appeal is heard early next month.

The current owner of the Cabinet, a property developer, is seeking to overturn the decision of North Herts Councillors last year to refuse retrospective planning permission for change of use. His appeal will be heard as a Public Inquiry over three days – November 6-8 – at the Council Offices, Letchworth – starting at 10am on the first day.

The Save the Cabinet Action Group will be represented at the Inquiry, alongside the Council and the developer.

Mike Howes, Chair of the Action Group, said

“Our campaign has enjoyed fantastic support since it has started, and we are very grateful to all contributors. We’ve had to raise a lot of money to pay for lawyers and experts and we’ve been very successful with our recent events.” 24£3,600.

Mike added:

“We’re still a little short of our target, so we need more contributions to our Fighting Fund even at this stage.

“Now we’re in the final countdown to the appeal itself – the decisive moment in the case. If we get the right result, it’s a major step towards reclaiming The Cabinet for the community. If the developer wins, Reed will have lost its lovely old pub forever.

“We have a good case and we are confident that good sense will prevail. But we need supporters to turn out if they possibly can, to show the Planning Inspector the level of community support for saving the last pub in Reed.”

For more information about the appeal see the Action Group’s website:

www.savethecabinet.uk/attend.htm .

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, 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 by financially credible parties to buy or rent the building and run it as a 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 commenced in mid-2016, without the requisite planning or listed building consents, and have been ongoing since. Despite complaints by neighbours and by Reed Parish Council, the planning authority, North Hertfordshire District Council, took no enforcement action.

Retrospective applications for planning and listed building consent were submitted in September 2016. Planning permission for change of use was refused by the members of the Planning Control Committee of NHDC in July 2017. The linked listed buildings applications have not yet been determined.

The developer has lodged an appeal against refusal of permission for change of use. The appeal will be heard by a planning inspector independent of North Herts District Council.

The Planning Inspectorate, which determines such appeals independently of planning authorities, has decided to decide this appeal by way of a public inquiry. This is a formal procedure with similarities to a court process. The Save the Cabinet Action Group has been granted “Rule 6 status”, which allows it to be represented at the appeal and have equivalent status to the principal parties – the appellant and the District Council.

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 the Action Group’s web site www.savethecabinet.uk.

The Action Group is also on Facebook, “Save the Cabinet at Reed”, and Twitter @SaveTheCabinet.