

## **PRESS RELEASE FROM THE SAVE THE CABINET ACTION GROUP**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 24 April 2018**

### **PUBLIC HEARING TO DECIDE CABINET APPEAL**

Campaigners determined to prevent the Grade II listed Cabinet pub at Reed being turned permanently into a house welcomed the news that there would be a hearing to decide the appeal against refusal of planning permission.

The owner of The Cabinet – a property developer – turned the building into a house without planning permission or listed building consent. Last July, North Hertfordshire councillors refused his retrospective application for planning permission for change of use. He has now appealed.

The Planning Inspectorate, which hears planning appeals, initially said they would deal with the case of the Cabinet in writing. Following an approach by Sir Oliver Heald MP, supported by a petition signed by more than 1400 local people, they announced on Friday that there would now be a public hearing.

No date has yet been fixed, but campaigners expect the hearing will take place during the early summer.

Members of the public have until 1 May to submit comments on the appeal. They can do so via <https://tinyurl.com/cabinetappeal>.

Responding to the news, Mike Howes, chair of the Save the Cabinet Action Group, said

“We are pleased that the Planning Inspectorate has decided to hold a hearing. It is only right that there should be a public airing of the issues, given the level of interest there has been in this case. We expect many of The Cabinet's supporters will want to attend.”

He added:

“This is the next major step on the road towards rescuing our lovely old pub. Our campaign will now focus on making the best possible case in support of the Cabinet. And by next Tuesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, we need supporters to write to the Inspectorate asking for the appeal to be dismissed.”

The Action Group is stepping up its fundraising activities to meet the costs of resisting the appeal. A pop-up pub night – to which everyone is welcome – will be held at Reed Village Hall this Saturday, 28 April from 6.30pm. And a dedicated Golf Day will be held at Barkway Park on 11 May.

More information can be found on the Action Group's website: [www.savethecabinet.uk](http://www.savethecabinet.uk).

## 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.

Planning appeals can be dealt with in three ways: in writing, by way of a hearing (at which the parties, including interested third parties such as objectors, may be represented), or by way of an inquiry (a more formal procedure during which evidence may be given on oath and the parties are typically represented by lawyers). The decision as to the appropriate procedure is for the Planning Inspectorate, which must take account, among other things, of the wishes of the appellant and the planning authority, and the level of local interest.

Under Section 9 of the 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.

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](http://www.savethecabinet.uk).

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