

# North Hertfordshire District Council

## Building Conservation comments

**File Ref:** 20/02430/FP

**Date:** 10/02/2021

**Planning Officer:** AMCD

**Address:** The Cabinet, High Street, Reed, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8AH

**Subject:** Retention of fencing, external kitchen flue and enclosed rear store.

The Cabinet is grade II listed and located within the Reed Conservation Area. The building was designated as such on 3 June 1987 and is described as follows:

**Public house. Late C17 or early C18, extended C19 and C20. Timber frame on brick base. Weatherboarded. Steeply pitched tiled roof. Originally 2 bays, extended by 1 bay to left with further additions at both ends. 2 storeys. Ground floor: entrance to left of original centre, recessed plank door in architrave with dentilled and bracketed hood, to left two 3 light small pane flush frame casements, to right one of 2 panes, all with hoodboards. First floor three 2 light small pane casements. Coved eaves. Cross axial ridge stack at original left end, part rebuilt. To rear a C19 continuous lean-to outshot behind main range and first added bay, weatherboarded and rendered. Rendered upper part of rear wall on main block with some comb pargetting. Short C20 gabled addition to left end, set back slightly. 1 storey mid C20 addition to right end with an entrance. Beyond this to right a C19 weatherboarded and slate roofed outbuilding with 2 doors to front. Interior: chamfered axial bearer, stop chamfered fireplace lintel.**

### **The Local Plan and NPPF**

The Local Plan was scheduled to have several additional hearings in Spring 2020 but the LP Inspector has confirmed the postponement of the LP Hearings due to coronavirus. The hearings recommenced on 23 November 2020. Some weight can still be attributed to the emerging North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031 Proposed Submission (September 2016) Incorporating the Proposed Main Modifications (November 2018) and the policies contained within it. Policy HE1 (as modified) is applicable.

With reference to the NPPF (2019), the following should be noted:

*"In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of..... the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness...." (para 192)*

*"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be)...." (para 193)*

*"Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification....." (para 194)*

*"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use." (para 196)*

## The proposal

The key issues relate to whether the works would occasion harm to the listed building's special character or affect its significance by occasioning harm to its setting or harm the character or appearance of the Reed Conservation Area.

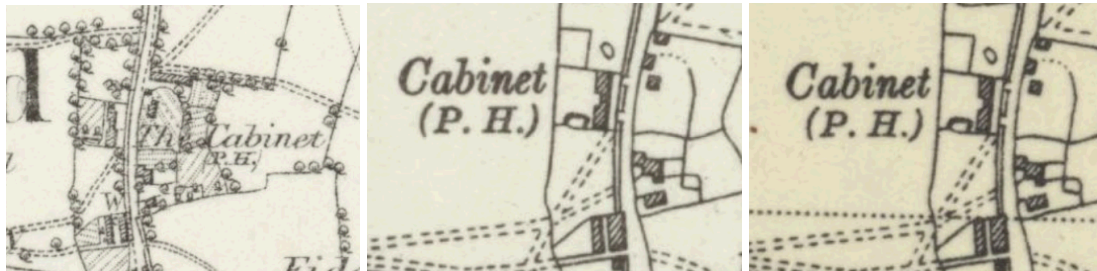
## Retention of fencing

Firstly, I would just like to set the historical context of the boundary divisions on the site by considering the following selected OS bas map information.

Surveyed: 1876 to 1878  
Published: 1880 to 1883

Revised: 1919  
Published: 1924

Revised: 1946 to 1949  
Published: 1950



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It is apparent that there appears to have been some form of historic demarcation of an enclosed 'garden' area spanning the **full width of The Cabinet building**. As seen in the Google Maps image below left, a hedge formed the northern boundary of the car park in 2009 with the pub garden situated to the north behind the hedge.



Although this section of fence (images below) on this part of the site forms a man-made 'harder' boundary when compared with the hedge, I find this section of fencing unobjectionable in terms of clearly differentiating between car park and 'garden'.



On 30 September 2016, I took the photo below which clearly shows a fence in the background where the hedge once existed. The second section of fence had not been erected at this point.



By the time of my most recent site (image below left), a second fence had also been erected for the sole purpose of securing a significant and private garden curtilage to the proposed dwellinghouse. The subdivision of the rear garden follows the intended subdivision of the building and in the image below the red rectangular outline shows an area of the restaurant extension where a large glazed opening has intentionally been weatherboarded over to presumably prevent overlooking into the 'private garden' (this is dealt with under ref:20/01350/LBC).



I note your email correspondence to the agent on 19/11/2020 in which you state:

*"..... There are two sections of fencing. One is between the pub garden boundary and the car park on the south side of the pub building, and one is in the middle of the pub garden area extending from the rear elevation of the building to the west boundary. I note from your plan that this is shown to be 'under' the west projection on the building when on site it is position slightly further north, extending from / off the west projection of the building.*

*The lawful use of the garden area is pub garden. Please can you explain:*

- *What the purpose or function of the fence in the middle of the garden is?*
- *What is the land rear of the two-storey part of the building to be used for?*
- *As this is separated from the land rear of the A3 use and given that these fences are*

*enclosing nearly half of the rear garden area so due to its size this area cannot be considered to be a land area 'ancillary' to the lawful use of the land as 'pub garden', please explain its use and provide justification....."*

### ***Retention of external kitchen flue***

The C19 weatherboarded building has been internally lined and the principal tie chords and struts encased which, I understand, needed to be done for fire reg purposes. This is considered unobjectionable, particularly if the pub is to provide a food offer. Serving this kitchen is an external stainless-steel flue which has since been included in this application. By reason of its form, materials and position, it is considered that this is an incongruous rear addition occasioning harm to the listed building and to the appearance of the conservation area.



### ***Retention of enclosed rear store***

As viewed from the road, the C19 weatherboarded part to the far-right hand end of The Cabinet was previously the ground floor cellar. On the approved ground floor plan under refs: 03/00331/1LB & 03/00692/1, a log store enclosure is indicated (a two-sided structure with no roof). Sometime after 2003, an open-sided 'smoking area' was erected with a plain tile roof supported off 8no. posts as noted on existing ground floor plan no. 16/001/A/01 under ref:16/02129/1LB. This 'shelter' has now been incorporated as an enclosed single-storey storage area with access off the commercial kitchen and has since been included in this application. The interior has been fully and rather crudely, lined with 'fire board' and does not make a positive contribution to the building's special character and is objectionable.



Furthermore, there is another poorly detailed store door alongside.





To conclude, it is considered that the combination of enclosing the former smoking shelter and the erection of flue extraction system, has led to an erosion of the building's external appearance. There is a case to suggest that if the smoking shelter had been removed and replaced with a gabled extension projecting rearward from the C19 weatherboarded section, then perhaps the flue could have been accommodated in the apex of this roof with only an opening being formed in the gable end for the outlet with the store room still being provided below. Whilst it is accepted that a commercial kitchen requires a commercial flue/mechanical extraction system, the size and position of the commercial kitchen extraction unit is such that this adversely affects the external appearance of the listed building. Furthermore, the way in which the former smoking shelter has been enclosed and in particular, the way this room has been internally fitted out is also considered to occasion harm to the building's special character.

### **Recommendation**

For the following reasons, I **OBJECT** to all aspects of this proposal:

#### **Reason 1**

*The commercial kitchen flue has already been installed at the rear of the far right-hand end of this grade II public house which is described in the list entry as a 'C19 weatherboarded and slate roofed outbuilding with 2 doors to front'. Although it is acknowledged that a commercial flue is necessary for the preparation of food and to assist in providing a viable commercial use, by reason of its size, shape, siting and materials, the commercial flue would result in a bulky, incongruous addition, thereby harming this building's special character and the appearance of the Reed Conservation Area. The extent of harm would be 'less than substantial' and a convincing justification has not been provided for this particular type of installation. Consequently, this aspect of the proposal fails to satisfy Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and the aims of Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (Proposed Main Modifications November 2018).*

#### **Reason 2**

*The far right-hand end of this grade II public house is described as a 'C19 weatherboarded and slate roofed outbuilding with 2 doors to front'. To the rear of this stood an open side smoking shelter linked to a small store abutting the C19 section. By reason of the way in which the former smoking shelter has been enclosed and connected to the existing building and the way this room has been internally fitted out, this is considered to occasion harm to the building's special character and the appearance of the Reed Conservation Area. The extent of harm would be 'less than substantial' and a convincing justification has not been provided for these works which have already been implemented. Consequently, this aspect of the proposal fails to satisfy Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and the aims of Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (Proposed Main Modifications November 2018).*

#### **Reason 3**

*Historically, the rear 'pub garden' curtilage to The Cabinet extended across the length of the building. The section of fence that extends from the rear corner of the restaurant extension, would divide this space and secure a significant and private garden curtilage to the accommodation element of the scheme and follows the currently implemented subdivision of the principal building. This severing of the pub garden will restrict the customers to the north end of the site and although this is a reasonably sized piece of land, this will impair customers' ability to experience the full surroundings to this listed building in particular the rear elevation of The Cabinet. To the contrary, this 'experience' would be fettered by a view of the commercial flue, enclosed store and a poorly detailed store door alongside. It is considered that this*

*northern section of fence occasions harm to the listed building's setting, thereby, harming its significance as a building historically served by a single rear garden curtilage and also harms the appearance of the Reed Conservation Area. The extent of harm would be 'less than substantial' and there is no convincing justification provided for the division of the rear garden. Consequently, this aspect of the proposal fails to satisfy Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and the aims of Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (Proposed Main Modifications November 2018).*

**Mark Simmons**  
**Senior Conservation Officer**