

CHECAA
Craigweil House and its Environs
Conservation Area Association

'Preserving our Regal, Historic and Architectural Heritage for Future Generations'

AW-108-17-T – Fell one Oak at 1 Wychwood Walk – 21-5-2017

Head of Planning Services
Arun District Council
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
BN17 5LF

21 May 2017

BY EMAIL

Dear Sir,

**OBJECTION to AW/108/17/T – application to fell one Oak, protected by TPO
BR/2/1958 - 1 Wychwood Walk**

Formed in 2001, CHECAA made application for and received designation of the Craigweil House Conservation Area and its 200 plus members have, as their raison d'être the duty to examine all planning applications submitted and to comment to the LPA where it considers appropriate. Given that the Craigweil Estate (part of the CA) was 'carved out of a forest', trees form an important part of the designation, as is to be found in the CA Statement and English Heritage report. It is a very significant feature of the estate – that is why it was retained when the house was built around 1986.

The writer well recalls the granting of planning permission for two houses, including the application site, and the strength of opposition presented by the estate company. Of major concern was the retention of trees on the open and undeveloped site, which had formed part of a 'land bank' of a builder, and it was decreed that this Oak be retained. The then Chairman of the Estate Company, Group Captain Teddy Frayne fought vigorously, and successfully, for its retention for, as with CHECAA, he and his Directors had a great respect and affinity for our Craigweil House tree stock and this Oak is part of it. Frayne's later successor as Chairman, the applicant Mr. Chambers, now seeks to have the Oak felled and we oppose this proposal.

This Oak tree is of substantial age and was part of the original Craigweil House forest. It towers, in majestic form, standing guardian over the estate and is seen, as a public amenity, from Kingsway, Wychwood Walk and Wychwood Close.

Houses throughout its 360 degree perimeter benefit from its presence in enjoying the rich, verdant bright green display it represents during the season for it is a tree of superb form.

The alternative, should the tree be removed, will be that all around will be left overlooking each other's gardens and looking at brick walls and roofs instead of enjoying the benefits of nature and part of the remaining original trees of our heritage in Craigweil House, for CHECAA says that, in nature, there is nothing more beautiful than an English Oak – and the sad truth is that global warming is causing their decline and the English Oak is in crisis and needs protection. They protect us environmentally.

There is mention of disease and a hole in the tree but this is not necessarily any great cause for alarm not for felling the tree. A look at Google will show hundreds of protected trees with holes where religious services are held with hundreds of people gathered and large enough to receive a bus – and some are 1000 years old. A bullet hole in a human leg does not a pre-cursor of death and nor is a hole in a tree trunk. **And that is why a Tree Surgeon and not Tree Feller may be a better person to consult rather than one who is said to have mutilated two 100 plus year old Yews on the estate in recent months. A surgeon would not have done that,**

CHECAA says that this Oak tree is an integral part of the heritage of the Craigweil House Conservation Area and should be preserved and protected with a new Tree Preservation Order which we now ask be issued and served for the tree is, patently, at risk.

CHECAA acknowledges that the tree, maybe through years of neglect by the owner, could be beyond salvation and, if that is the case, in that scenario then CHECAA asks that a replacement English Oak be required to be planted and that, of course, will also carry the protection of the existing and, we trust, a new TPO. We note the 'professional' opinion of Arun Tree Company in attributing basal damage to original house building works – over 30 years ago. We also note that the applicant, at paragraph 7, says, at 'c)' **'Any replanting in this position contravenes recommended planting guide lines'. We do not understand this and the applicant fails to explain to what he refers.**

We ask that the Consultant Arboriculturalist please be asked to inspect the tree and to report and that his highly qualified and experienced advice be recognised and followed by the Decision Maker.

Until such advice is received, CHECAA OBJECTS to this application.

Yours faithfully

Richard D. Ostler
Chairman

Established 20 January 2001

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