

Richard Martin
Tree & Landscape Officer, Greenspace
Arun District Council
Bognor Regis Town Hall
Clarence Road
BOGNOR REGIS
PO21 1LD

My Ref: D1755AIAL1

29th August 2017

Dear Richard,

**RE: AW/155/17/PL - BRUS LODGE, 28A KINGSWAY, ALDWICK, PO21 4DH
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

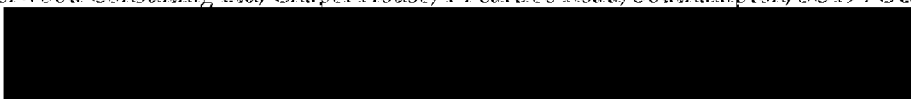
I refer to your instruction to advise on the arboricultural implications of the above planning application and confirm that I have now visited the site. My assessment with conclusions and recommendations is set out below.

I visited the site on 16th August 2017 and was granted access by the applicant. The weather at the time of the visit was dry and sunny with a light breeze and good visibility. I carried out a brief ground-based non-invasive assessment of the trees. I have based my assessment on the documents relating to the application ref: AW/155/17/PL available on the Council's planning web-site page. In particular I referred to the Seaman Partnership Ltd Proposed Site Plan drawing number TSP481 PL22 Revision A dated 17.07.17. I have also seen the Bernie Harverson report 'Arboricultural Review of Planning Application' (the BH report) ref: 0841.bjh.July17 submitted on behalf of the Craigweil House and its Environs Conservation Area Association (CHECAA) and comment on that report in addition.

Tree information: The factual tree information in support of the application is contained in the Seaman Partnership Ltd 'Existing Tree Schedule' of 11th May 2017. This is effectively a schedule to BS5837 and accords with my own site assessment and measurement of trees. In general, the individual trees are poor; and the shrubby growth is overgrown, with structural and health problems developing.

Tree constraints plan: This is prepared by Lizard Landscape Design and based on the Seaman Partnership Ltd tree schedule and in turn informs the Lizard Landscape Design Tree Retention and Protection Plan. Both plans are challenging to read, requiring reference to the tree schedule

Alderwood Consulting Ltd, Chapel House, 1 Peartree Road, Southampton, SO19 7GU



for detail corroboration. The Tree Retention plan is optimistic in its management of the proposed surfacing in relation to the retained T4 (which appears to be a Norway maple); and the proposed protective fencing does not give sufficient and practicable room for building construction access across the front elevation of the proposed building. No protection is shown for T4. Generally, I take the view that protection measures should be in proportion to the health, condition and amenity value of the trees. I find that the trees and vegetation on this site frontage show evidence of haphazard pruning and benign neglect which significantly affects their health, form and long-term prospects. From the road, the vegetation looks healthy; closer inspection shows structural, management and health problems. However, this does not mean that whatever elements are to be retained do not warrant proper protection, and in that respect, I find that the tree protection and site management proposals are not adequate. This is partly due to the odd arrangement of the access round the Norway maple; and it is not clear by what assessment method it was determined that the oak should go and the Norway maple remain, as both trees are similar in condition and form. I am not satisfied that the submitted Tree Retention and Protection Plan and method statement are confidently clear or reasonably practicable and adequately address the issue of harm to retained trees. Nor am I satisfied that a condition of consent requiring a revised protection plan and method statement would be a sufficient improvement as to remove the concerns about harm to trees. BS5837 recommends that tree information should be used to inform proposed layouts and design. I have seen no evidence in these submissions to suggest that this approach was taken here; the evidence I have seen suggests that a layout was determined, and the tree decisions came afterwards

Post occupancy: In respect of the effects of the retained trees on the new occupants, the vegetation is to the north of the proposed dwelling, with main amenity fenestration and outlooks to the rear south elevation. Retained trees will not unduly shade or dominate the proposed dwelling.

The BH report: Turning to the BH report, I agree that the road frontage vegetation is mainly multi-stemmed evergreen species which merge together to provide a dense green screen. However, the only two trees of any size or individual significance are the Norway maple T4 and the oak T5. Notwithstanding the TPO, I am not satisfied that the pittosporum is reasonably a tree within the meaning of the act. In any event, it is structurally in poor condition, multi-stemmed from ground level with several stems dead or dying, and with evidence of management by topping (crown height reduction). This is BS5837 category C at best. The bays are overgrown shrubs. However, the BH report makes good points about the lack of clarity e.g. on which vegetation elements are to go and which to stay; on how the protective fencing is going to work in practice; on the lack of detail of additional elements e.g. the installation of services; and the impracticality of the process of development, given the proximity of development (including the access) to retained trees/shrubs. In these respects, I have some sympathy with the views expressed in the BH report.

Conclusions: In conclusion, I find that the proposed development by the construction of a detached dwelling with access to Kingsway is likely to cause harm to retained trees, within a

Conservation Area, and some of which are protected by TPO. The proposals do not conserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area. I am not satisfied that adequate provisions have been made for the protection of trees and vegetation proposed for retention. The submitted plans do not show all vegetation on or closely adjacent to the site – for preliminary assessment the Conservation Area lower limit of 7.5cm diameter at breast height for trees should be the benchmark.

Recommendations: I recommend that this application be refused on the grounds that it is likely to cause harm to retained trees, with corresponding harm to the character of the Conservation Area and to the tree preservation order.

Please call me if you need to discuss any of these points.

Yours sincerely



Jonathan Fulcher **DipArb FARborA**

Letter re: 28a Kingsway, Aldwick

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