

CHECAA

Craigweil House and its Environs

Conservation Area Association

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

Objection (6) to AW-155-17-2017 – Hard surface frontage of Brus Lodge garden - 8-11-2017

Head of Planning Application,
Arun District Council
Littlehampton
BN17 5LF

BY EMAIL

8 November 2017

Dear Sir,

**OBJECTION TO AW/155/17/PL and HARD SURFACING FRONT GARDEN
AND THIRD PARTY'S GRASS VERGE AT 28 KINGSWAY – ALL WITHIN
The Craigweil House Conservation Area and Area of Special Character.**

Summary of creation of Brus Lodge

CHECAA's 200 plus members continue to be appalled by and to object to this proposed development of the intensely treed front garden of Brus Lodge, the most substantial and prominent and highly valued amenity garden feature in Kingsway, and to the proposal to replace it with the creation of a 3.9m wide vehicular entrance to the western end of the frontage and a smaller pedestrian entrance in the middle of the garden.

Both of these development proposals simply appear on plans but are not part of the planning application. Nor is there any declaration of notification to the third party owner of the verge, not of any approval by the owner to allow this land to be taken over by the applicant for any reason at all. The application fails even to address the issue of Access – a statutory integral ingredient of any development and, on that ground alone, should, we respectfully suggest, be refused by the Decision Maker.

The grassed and treed verge from the front Oak fence of the Brus Lodge garden northern – front - boundary and the concrete roadway are in the ownership of **The Craigweil Private Estate Limited (CPEL)**. This has been the case since the Estate was created and Brus Lodge built as designed by Joshua Auty, in accordance with a Bognor Regis Urban District Council consent given on the 15 September 1933. This did not include either proposed new entrances, but a much narrower entrance to Little Fellows, 31 The Drive and its Kingsway garage which still stands to this day. **However, it afforded secondary exclusive access to Little Fellows and nothing else.**

Much later, Little Fellows' narrow driveway from Kingsway to its nearby garage and then to the house in The Drive, was bought by the owner of Brus Lodge complete with the access to the garage. Little Fellows was gifted by the estate owner, Sir Arthur Du Cros, Bart., as a wedding present when she married Sir Maurice Jenks, a moneyed, influential man of substantial stature at the time and a future Lord Mayor of the City of London. That expensive luxury of an access and second garage in Kingsway as well as The Drive, where there was an integral garage with the house, was part of the luxurious property gifted to his daughter as a wedding present by Sir Arthur Du Cros.

It has to be stressed, once again, for avoidance of all doubt, that the suggestions and implications that this garden is an established, vacant, house plot and that the gateway is the established access to it is totally spurious, as also are the repeated attempts to create that impression. On this application the spurious tactic is to describe the Brus Lodge front garden as being '28A Kingsway' when Arun District Council and Royal Mail assert that no such address exists. As to fact, the eastern end of Brus Lodge has long been named '28a Kingsway' – being the home of the applicant's mother and a granny annex, in fact.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION ISSUES

CHECAA has already sought detail of the hard surfacing proposals, and sectional construction plans to the area of garden between the proposed house and the new proposed fence but has received no information and none has been disclosed on the website from the applicant so we know nothing of this design and construction detail. **This is critically important for ensuring the preservation of the integrity of the Root Protection Areas (RPA) of many trees the applicant states are to be retained and two others which are protected by ADC Tree Preservation Order AW/1/2016. That TPO resulted from CHECAA's Consultant Arboriculturalist's recommendations.**

One tree protected by ADC is a superb and imposing Pittosporum which is in line with the proposed new central footpath entrance and the other is the magnificent Norway Maple whose trunk is immediately to the left (east) of the former Little Fellows entrance and whose RPA, through 360 degrees encompasses the whole of the verge, the existing driveway and the land to the boundary of White House, 24 Kingsway, to the west. Their RPA's each embrace the whole of the verge and, if permission is granted, these must be permanently fenced off from before start of work to completion and the land enclosed regarded as 'sacrosanct'. No storage of plant or materials may occur nor vehicle access.

All hard surfacing between the fence and the house will be directly on top of the RPA's of both protected trees, which the applicant undertakes to preserve unharmed, yet fails to explain how. The total root run will be heavily compromised if the top 600mm of ground is disturbed or excavated in any way. CHECAA firmly contends that the work cannot be done without breaching major provisions of the British Standard 5837:2012, the loss of or causing severe damage to TPO's trees.

Somewhat perversely, since the reports of Lizard Landscapes - who are NOT qualified Arboriculturalists, as is required by the British Standard - did not supply a Method Statement, or any sectional drawings which have been repeatedly requested – we repeat - for the construction of this highly sensitive area where vehicles will pass and be parked, the two Arboricultural Consultants have not had the opportunity to comment upon its adequacy.

The sensitivity of that area, in protection of the trees – particularly by the proposed, but unauthorised site entrance over CPEL's ground to a width of 3.9M – is recognised in requiring sawdust and steel protection plates to be laid BEFORE any entrance to the site commences. YET, there is no provision for its protection thereafter.

We attach a sectional drawing of one notable UK builder who specialises in constructing permeable driveways and hard standings. Assuming that an 80mm thick permeable block would be used and that a sub-base of 150mm was provided then the driveway would be 730mm deep – virtually 2'6".

That would involve excavation – and NO disturbance of the existing surface can be tolerated – so the construction has to be suspended, as was recommended for Queenslawn, 36 Kingsway in recent years, with piles and beams supporting the whole driveway while bridging and protecting the RPA's of the two TPO's trees. That construction, plus the driveway above, would raise the front area by more than a metre (3' 3") and that would leave the driveway sitting half way above the front door step! The driveway must also be at least .5M (1'7") away from the bole of any tree and that compromises the indicative drawing of the access entrance which is not in the application. It has to be noted that the 'site' ends at the fence (marked in red) and there is no provision for vehicular or pedestrian access – the site is sealed on all sides. CHECAA says that this drive cannot be constructed without having a significant adverse impact on the contribution of the trees at Brus Lodge to the amenity value of the wider setting of Craigweil House Conservation Area.

The applicant says nothing!

CONCLUSION

This site is considered by CHECAA members to be of the utmost importance to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and says that the house proposed for this further attempt to infill the front garden of Brus Lodge is unacceptable and certainly does not accord with the Kingsway assessment by English Heritage and in the CA Statement as expressing the 'character of grandeur'.

We say that the scheme would harm the character of its surroundings, and their setting of which this is part, particularly when considering that the three original houses, Brus Lodge (28); The White House (24) and Little Fellows at 31 The Drive are designated as Heritage Assets in the Local Plan, Listed under Policy GEN22.

We stress again the National Planning Policy Framework policy guidance and suggest that the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset – the Conservation Area and its setting – would be less than substantial BUT there would, nevertheless, be harm caused by this development. Likewise there would be harm caused to the Area of Special Character.

The much-lauded addition of one house carries little weight, we suggest, and not sufficient to outweigh the harm the development would cause to the character, appearance and setting of the Conservation Area and harm caused (no matter how apparently small) which, as the NPPF emphasises, is irreversible and becomes cumulative to a Conservation Area.

Please Refuse this application.

Yours faithfully,

**Richard D. Ostler
Chairman**

Attached: Sectional construction drawing of a typical permeable driveway.

Established 20 January 2001

**Chairman: Richard D. Ostler: 'Silvergates', 52 The Drive, Craigweil-on-Sea, Aldwick, PO21 4DT
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