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AW-212-15-T – 21 Kingsway, Surgery to Monkey Puzzle Tree – 17-9-2015

BY EMAIL ONLY – COLOUR PHOTOGRAPH ATTACHED.

Head of Planning Service
Arun District Council
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
BN5 7LF

17 September 2015

Dear Sir,

**OBJECTION to AW/212/15/T – 'Kingslea', 21 Kingsway, Craigweil Private Estate –
Lopping of ten branches from mature Monkey Puzzle Tree**

An application similar to this – to lop six branches - was made in 2007 on the grounds that pigeons sat on the branches and defecated on the garage and ground below. Further, that squirrels climbed the trees, jumped onto the roof of the house and tried to get into the roof space. These grounds paid no regard or respect to the fact that this spectacular tree – the National Tree of Chile and one which is now Nationally recorded throughout the United Kingdom because of its relative rarity – would be damaged by such major surgery and probably be killed.

Nor did that application give any arboricultural or horticultural reason for branches to be lopped and that, in assessing the need for tree surgery, must ALWAYS be the main consideration of the inspecting Arboriculturalist and our Tree Officer. There were No such reasons to justify lopping 6 branches in 2007 and there are, equally, no such reasons – not one is even hinted at – in this 2015 application.

Refusing the application in 2007, the Case Officer reported that ***'The tree is a significant feature in the local landscape...is in sound and healthy condition ...tree surgery proposed in the application would result in excessive reduction of the tree's landscape impact and undue detriment to the visual amenities of the locality.'***

That firm and accurate assessment of this tree – the ONLY Chile Pine known to exist in Aldwick Parish – is even more true today when it is taller and, patently, BRANCHES HAVE BEEN UNLAWFULLY LOPPED since 2007 for they were said to be touching the garage at that time and, as my attached photograph shows, there is no branch anywhere near the garage in 2015 – when this photograph was taken last week.

It is right to note that just one Monkey Puzzle Tree grows at Kew Royal Botanic Gardens and the last of the initial Chile Pines grown there from 1780 but just one down stands by the Orangery, planted in 1978. There is international concern regarding its decline and it is recorded as being 'endangered' – a situation which has inspired Kew's Millenium Seed Bank to secure store its seed to ensure its survival.

Liverpool City Council has a Register of Monkey Puzzle Trees and, today, there are but 71 such trees within their vast area. Clearly, we must treasure and preserve this majestic specimen in Kingsway for the enjoyment of generations to come.

It can live to 1000 years – an astonishing feat and was alive 200 million years ago : the Monkey Puzzle Tree is something to be treasured and preserved at all cost. The Cornwall (where it will grow happily) Eden Project is contributing to its preservation – it is so important!

Within the United Kingdom, the Chile Pine grows well in the south/western areas of Cornwall and Devon and on the west coast of Scotland. Specimen are to be found at Alvaston Castle in Derbyshire. AND, YET, WE ARE PRIVILEGED TO HAVE ONE AT ALDWICK AND ON THE CRAIGWEIL HOUSE CONSERVATION AREA!

This tree is magnificent and was, as the result of the inspection in 2007 and a request from CHECCA, made the subject of Tree Preservation Order AW /1/08. It must be preserved – and, in particular, PRESERVED FROM EXCESSIVE SURGERY AS IS PROPOSED BECAUSE **IT IS WELL CHRONICLED THAT SEVERE LOPPING WILL KILL A MONKEY PUZZLE TREE.**

Please Refuse this application.

Yours faithfully,

Richard D. Ostler.

