

CHECAA

Craigweil House and its Environs

Conservation Area Association

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

AW-267-15 - HH – Objection to roof change and cladding proposals – 15-10-15

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

15 October 2015

EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sir

**OBJECTION to AW/267/15/HH - replacement of clay tile roof and proposed
cladding and cladding colour – 68 The Drive – within the
Craigweil House Conservation Area and Craigweil House Area of Special Character**

The Craigweil House and its Environs Conservation Area Association (CHECAA) was established in 2001 to seek conservation area (CA) designation for the former Craigweil House (owned by Sir Arthur Du Cros and where King George the Fifth recuperated with Queen Mary in the Spring of 1929) and the development site is set upon part of the original house footprint which was demolished in 1938.

CHECAA secured conservation area status from Arun District Council in April 2009 and has a membership of over 200 people each dedicated to the ongoing objective of ensuring that Craigweil House CA, with all its Regal, historic and architectural assets be preserved and enhanced for the benefit of future generations and for the Nation. The area is unique in that it is also a locally designated Area of Special Character (ASC - within the 2003 Arun District Local Plan) – the only area to have dual designation in Arun. Further, the beach, which is described as being the most precious Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the United Kingdom and the world, is also embraced within the ASC and CA.

Joshua Auty, FRIBA, a prominent architect of the day was retained by Du Cros and designed the layout of the Craigweil House development and many of the major properties including 'Shore Cottage', 66 The Drive, located immediately to the west of the application site at 68 The Drive. Both are located at a pivotal position at the south end of Queensway and are seen by all, in one view, from that junction with The Drive. Shore Cottage is historically important for it was the last of Auty's creations at Craigweil.

More than that, it is recorded on the Arun District Council Local List as a house of character and is a recognised Heritage Asset and, in that context, CHECAA contends that, in compliance with paragraph 128 et al of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2012 (NPPF), *'should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. As a minimum the relevant assets should be assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset.'*

At paragraph 132, the LPA is directed that *'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. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.*

Accordingly, we respectfully ask that the District Conservation Officer be asked to study the development; its relationship to 'Shore Cottage' and the likely impact that this development will have upon the heritage asset. This issue, we have to say, appears to have received scant attention – far less than its importance warrants.

At once, it has to be said that the stark and we say harmful effect the change of colour of 68 to GREY will have upon the Conservation Area generally and the Heritage Asset, in particular, will be extremely damaging to the setting of 66 and have a severely adverse effect upon the conservation area in general.

The applicant has not even addressed the fact that the development site is also within the Craigweil House Area of Special Character (ASC) nor indicated any way in which it will make a Positive Contribution to the ASC. They have merely recognised the Craigweil House Conservation Area (even if incorrectly named) but failed to indicate any aspect of the development which serves to *preserve or enhance the CA OR ITS SETTING*.

CHECAA has no difficulty in explaining why the applicant fails to pass these tests for the ASC and CA and it is simply that he has no case to support this tatty and inadequate scheme which is without architectural merit or design and is simply a box, stripped of its original features, turned into what looks like typical university student lodging house.

We say that it has no place in this CA and that the colour should be required to be sympathetic to the heritage asset next door, 'Shore Cottage'. Within the overall design, which we had closely studied, we find no aspect that reflects the character of architectural style that was the origin of Craigweil House CA. We say that the total absence of any attempt to enhance the area should weigh heavily against the approval of this application.

In the application form, at 7, it is falsely stated that no trees are within falling distance of the house. Two Oak Trees certainly are. On the Boundary and Block plans it is falsely indicated that massive areas, now part of the development, are not associated with it. **We say that the applicant should be made to respect and observe those boundaries and not to breach them – and that includes moving two massive containers at the front.**

It is proposed that there be *‘Installation of LED downlights into the eaves soffit at 2m centres.’* and we say that this would radically degenerate the general standard of the conservation area and leave the property looking more like a low class, downtown, 24 hour drinking bar and night club than a high class residence on a most important south coast marine estate steeped in regal and architectural history. Such a tawdry addition can have only a negative impact on the conservation area and impact negatively and cause harm to it. It certainly neither preserves nor enhances the character of the CA nor makes a positive contribution to the ASC. And it flies in the face of GEN7 which stipulates that *‘Planning permission will only be granted for schemes displaying high quality design and layout.’*

And that part of GEN7 applies equally to the proposed substantial balcony to be created at first floor level on the eastern side of the house in addition to the balcony which runs virtually the whole length to the south (rear) side, facing the sea and with a metal spiral staircase integral with it.

CHECAA says that this is unreasonable and unnecessary for it serves only to enable overlooking to the bungalows to the north of The Drive and into the front and rear garden of No. 70 The Drive. There is debate as to whether or not glass screening with a stainless steel framework should be allowed or a blockwork enclosure. CHECAA are indifferent to the form of enclosure but maintain that the balcony should not be allowed. There is NO precedent for a side balcony on ANY house within the CA and to allow this would create a harmful impact and precedent. This proposal shows a complete disregard for the provisions of Policy GEN19 in relation to overlooking and overbearing effect on neighbouring properties. It shows no respect or consideration for the applicant’s established, elderly and sick neighbours and we consider that it should not be permitted.

We ask that this application, please, to be REFUSED.

Yours faithfully

Richard D. Ostler
Chairman

Established 20 January 2001

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