

Saffron Lodge, 46 Kingsway
Craigweil on Sea, Bognor Regis
West Sussex, PO21 4DN

My Ref: TREES-Twiten-AW284-13-T-1

17th December 2013

EMAILED to Planning Services on 17th Dec 2013.

The Head of Planning Services
Arun District Council
Arun Civic Centre, Maltravers Road
Littlehampton, West Sussex
BN17 5LF

Dear Sirs

Ref: **Planning Applications: AW/284/13/T-- OBJECTION**
Various Locations-Trees/Verges, Kingsway, Craigweil

This Application appears **at the same time as another, AW/308/13/TC,** both located at the same address, namely the south east boundary to No.57 Kingsway, Craigweil.

My concern and I will be writing on the other application similarly, is that tree work proposed along this hedge line, which incorporates the removal of several mature trees, will leave this part of The Craigweil House Conservation Area exposed as part of its public amenity and be counter to the requirements of Conservation Areas within the District Local Plan.

Whilst this application may not be judged as 'Development', works for Planning Permission and especially within Conservation Areas are required to make 'a Positive Contribution to the area' (Policy GEN7 -(vi) and to 'Preserve or Enhance the Character or Appearance' (POLICY-Area 2) of that Conservation Area. Policy-GEN 7 also says under (v) 'development must take account of any unacceptable adverse impact that may arise from adjoining land uses or property', and at (vi) 'retains significant open or wooded areas which, in their own right, make a material contribution to the local environment'.

Planning documents and guidance I have noted speak of the importance of 'GROUPS of Trees'. It is often the case that TPO's for an area will nominate accurately where those 'groups' are so that anyone working in those areas can appreciate their responsibilities for the maintenance of them.

In these cases (Appl.284 and 308), no such TPO exists, though the tree/shrub line in question is an important backdrop to buildings and appearance in the vicinity, situated as it is at the eastern entrance to the Craigweil Private Estate and Craigweil House Conservation Area. It forms part of the first things the public see upon entering the Estate/Conservation Area from its eastern boundary. This must surely be a true public amenity and must be maintained as such. I am concerned that the removal of four established conifers from this feature will destroy much of the existing and established character of the feature. Regular maintenance of such conifers can and should be adopted, not only to keep the trees in good condition but also to limit the amount of spread over the pedestrian pathway adjacent. There is no need to remove the conifers, with the accompanying damage that will also accrue to the ground roots of other adjacent vegetation.

As stated above we are dealing here with TWO APPLICATIONS in the same location, presumably because of different ownerships (though as they are in the same border I am puzzled by that claim). **I am asking most urgently, for OFFICERS (Case and Arboricultural) to look at BOTH applications together** for an overall judgement to be taken, **rather than taking each application in isolation of the other.** There may well be a case for creating a 'Group of Trees' under a new TPO at this location

to give full and proper protection to this important and prominent stretch of greenery. I do appreciate that 'shrubs' cannot be recognised as part of a group of trees, but at least if the trees have some respect and 'legal' status, it may encourage the adjacent shrubs to be similarly maintained regularly.

My attention is also drawn at this time to recent Appeal Decisions, where HM Inspectors have taken the presence and maintenance of trees very seriously where maybe local officers have been less than keen. I cite the Appeal decisions at 22 The Drive (AW/91/13) where a group of trees exists and more recently, at 38 Kingsway (AW/150/13) where the Inspector did consider the tree issues worthy of consideration, even though they did not directly affect the Decision. In this case at 57 Kingsway therefore, I am sure an Inspector would again look very carefully at how trees and shrubs make a major and positive impact upon the appearance and public amenity within the Craigweil House Conservation Area.

From the above Appeal Decision for AW/91/13, under Para 2, the Inspector says:
 'The main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposed wall and gates on the Character and Appearance of the Craigweil House Conservation Area and on **the health, appearance and longevity of the group of mature trees** immediately adjacent to the access.....'. Then in Para 7 – 'There are 5 mature trees on the grassed area immediately to the south of the access to No.22.....These trees are attractive mature specimens **which make a substantial and positive contribution to the amenity of the area.**'

With the importance of the 'landscape' within this application area, **please take full account** of the importance of both the **District's own policy** requirements for Conservation Areas and Areas of Special Character, together with the **stress by Inspectors**, to fully uphold those Arun District Council policies in respect of landscape and character when assessing this application.

Please recommend refusal of this Application and construct a **new Tree Preservation Order** on the group of trees within this boundary line.

Yours faithfully

Ian Jefferies

c.c.Mr Martyn White, Conservation Officer ADC.
 Mr J Russell Wells, Parks Department
 Councillor Mrs Gill Brown.